. The matter which this page contains is carefully selected from various sources; and we guarantee that, to any intelligent farmer or housewife, the contents of this single page, from week to week during the year, will be worth several times the subscription price of the paper.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MARS.

Dear Astronomic Man,
Please tell us all you can
About the stars.
And if there's people there,
What likeness do they bear,
Up in Mars?

Please tell as you grope
Around with telescope,
What you find.
Are there human beings there
Exactly as we are,
Or other kind?

Do tell us, do you find
That life there is a "grind"
All the year?
Do people toil and fret,
Worry, groan and sweat
Same as here?

Please tell us 'bout the mountains,
The valleys and the fountains
In the stars.
Are the ice-caps really melted;
Are the rocks there being smelted,
Up in Mars?

Canals there!—are they double?
Are the public having trouble
With their cars?
'Bout the "cable" and the "trolley?"
Are the people mad or jolly,
Up in Mars?

Do tell us if the fact is
That Mars, upon his axis, is
Going slow?
That Phoebos sails around him
So fast as to astound him,
Is it so?

—*Fitz-Nigel in Albany Evening Journal.*

THE HOME.

Sunburn.

Persons with sensitive complexions often experience considerable suffering from simple sunburn. The remedy in such cases is care in protecting the complexion in midday, and the use of some simple lotion to heal the blistered and irritated skin. One of the best unguents for this purpose is a cold cream made of almond oil or of sweet olive oil. A simple camphor ice rubbed over the flesh is also efficacious, and a single application will often bring relief in a night.

Where one is certain to be exposed to a strong sun in riding or rowing, it does no harm to make some preparation for it. Do this in exactly the same way that you protect your face from the wind in winter. Rub the skin with a simple soft cream, and, if you wish, powder it well. Wipe off any surplus powder or oil, and when you come in, cleanse the complexion thoroughly with warm water and a little pure Castile soap, if it does not irritate your skin.

If it is impossible to give advice in a case like this to all, as certain complexions are especially sensitive to some one ingredient which is soothing to others. Glycerine is extremely irritating to many complexions because of the tendency it has to dry the skin. This may be partly overcome by mixing it with a certain amount of rose water. But a simple cold cream, the recipe for which was given in these columns, is one of the most suitable and harmless things that can be put upon the skin, furnishing the pores as it does with needed nourishment, and there are very few complexions, except oily ones, with which it does not agree. Oily complexions need no lotion of any kind, but they should be wiped with cologne and dusted with some simple powder to remedy this defect, which becomes a painful disfigurement in warm weather.

It is a great mistake to expose the complexion unnecessarily in summer. All the tonic effects of country air and life may be enjoyed without parching the skin or turning it brown with tan. The positive injury done to the skin in a single season by carelessness does more to increase wrinkles and turn the individual old before her time, than all the harmless lotions in the world will remedy. The rule in all cases is care. An ample hat or sunshade which protects the face is an essential part of the summer outfit.

True Hospitality.

In the art of entertaining our friends we are more apt to err in the observance than in the breach. There is no method of rendering even the most self-consequential individual so uncomfortable as by over-obsequious attention, and to a modest visitor such strained courtesy becomes a positive pain.

It is not true hospitality to depart from our regular mode of living when we receive a guest, or surround him by a strained punctilio, which is uncomfortable alike to receiver and giver. There is a good old homely sound in the term "pot-luck," which indicates that the guest is to share our fireside, to be one with us, and partake of the goods that may be provided. If we all of us live true lives, lives which we are not ashamed to have the world see and know, if we did not have poor wretched skeletons heading in our closets, which we have not heart or bravery enough to clear of our houses, we could receive our guest into our very homes, and not turn our dwellings into a hostelry for his reception.

That wretched thing, which, for a better term we call pride, but which is really the true demon of covetousness, is forever turning our homes topsy-turvy, creating wretched makeshifts to make an appearance of an over-luxurious board, when we ought to be proud of the simple and homely good fare which we are able to have. How many women possessed of dainty rag carpets, well and tastefully made, over which the sunshine can play forever without any danger of fading them, long anxiously for tapestry carpets, and shut out all the sunshine when they have got them, for fear they may be faded!

It is just this spirit that goes through the whole household, the spirit of dissatisfaction with all the homely surroundings—a desire to introduce show and glitter and false makeshifts of every kind, which does more to break up family happiness and destroy all chance of extending true hospitality to our friends than anything else. If we live true lives, we can bring our friends home at any time that we choose to invite them, and we need not apologize for the simple fare. They will appreciate the old scriptural adage: "Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

She indeed is the truest hostess who makes her guests feel most at their ease, who, in the plain old Saxon, can make them at home. The opening of dusty shut-up parlors, which smell of moth-eaten carpets, the parade of the best china on the table with trembling care lest a piece be broken, the setting forth of so elaborate a menu that it tends to gluttony, will never make our friends "at home." If our parlors are always open and we have no bric-a-brac too fragile to be admired by all the family, if no part of the house is too good to be made use of whenever necessary, if in short we sacrifice entirely that gloomy sepulchral room, which is still maintained in many old families—the state parlor—we shall live much more natural, easy lives.

We can then receive our friends into the living room, make them at home in the best that we have for ourselves, and we may always be satisfied that it will please them better than any effort of strained hospitality. She learns to be a true hostess who gives her guests their freedom, ever watchful of their wants, yet never allowing them to be aware of that watchfulness.

Health and the Skin.

We must consider shortly the influence of general health on the skin. That it does act there can be no doubt; the examples are innumerable, but rather medical; and young ladies who find their complexion becoming yellow, or a sort of pale green, or too red, should consult their doctors, for depend upon it there is something wrong, and until it is put right local treatment of the skin is useless. To take a familiar instance; it is always said that flushing of the face after meals is a sign of indigestion. No doubt the liver and the stomach greatly influence the skin. A person, for instance, with diabetes is subject to carbuncle. Naturally, any poison circulating in the blood will affect the skin, especially if it is removed by the skin.

As regards diet in relation to the skin, it is difficult to lay down general rules for all cases, but no doubt diet does greatly influence the skin; for instance, a man eats shell-fish and has an attack of nettlerash. It is extremely advisable in skin disease to avoid all shell-fish (except oysters), goose and pork, all strongly spiced things, such as highly-seasoned soups, pickles or curries. A mouthful of curry will cause many a person to perspire profusely about the head and face. Beer is extremely bad for most skin diseases. In all skin diseases over fatigue and weakness are bad, and the skin is apt to grow coarse, pallid and relaxed when the body is ill nourished. Therefore, a nourishing and digestible diet is often of great importance, but it is impossible to prescribe general rules for all persons. A good breakfast is generally important, both as a sign of health and to give the body strength for the day. The Duke of Wellington, Sir Walter Scott, and many other great men depended much on their breakfasts. Doctors know these facts so well that in some eruptions the patient has no local treatment whatever, and cases are brought to a successful issue by diet and internal medication alone.

That sudden changes of temperature are detrimental to the skin is well-known, and we have merely to appeal to such familiar facts as chaps and chilblains to impress the fact; but what is not thoroughly realized is, that sudden change of temperature without re-action is deleterious, but that if re-action is established, as in the glow after a cold bath, no harm is done.

Fresh air and exercise are extremely important to those who wish to preserve the complexion. Some persons have a horror of the "dairymaid" style of beauty, and prefer the die-away, fading flower style. Do not listen to them. Depend upon it, a properly treated skin will be able to enjoy fresh air without being made rough or coarse; and remember that health is a terrible price to pay for an unwholesome and transient fad. Remember, young ladies, you may be mothers some day, and will assuredly transmit your follies and your frailties to helpless children. Look at the pale child of the slum, and take a warning. Exercise in the fresh air is one of the most potent makers of a good complexion.

Finally, avoid all irritation of the skin, especially scratching, which is often a mere habit. If your skins will not bear flannel next them, wear silk.

Lastly, if your relations with your best friend are a little strained, on account of the natural superiority of her complexion, do not put on any wash, but try these rules and consult your doctor. Finally, remember that beauty is only skin deep, but personal cleanliness is a virtue capable of immediate repair whenever it shows the least sign of decay.—*Cassell's Family Magazine.*

Don't Neglect Your Piano.

"You make a great mistake," said a piano-maker the other day, "if you think you have done your duty to a piano if you merely keep it in tune. Tuning is necessary, of course, and ought to be done at least four times a year, but this is not all by any means. The greatest injury that a piano receives is from being kept in an overheated room in the winter. It will do better in a room that is not quite warm enough for comfort.

"You probably know that the life of the piano is the sounding-board. When the piano is made this is forced into the case so tightly that it bulges up in the centre. This would contain some moisture when it is put into the piano, and it gathers more on damp days. When the instrument is kept in an overheated and dry room this moisture dries out, the sounding-board loses its bulge, gets flabby and finally cracks. If it doesn't crack the tone becomes thin and leathery, and the whole mechanism rattles, for the felt cloths used in the action dry up. Yes, you can prevent this. Keep a growing plant in the room, and if this thrives the piano will, or there is something wrong with it.

"Another scheme is to keep a large vase or urn with a sopping wet sponge in it near or under the piano. Some practice like this is necessary for the good of a piano if it is kept in a warm room. A piano in a room that is 40 degrees below zero can be gradually warmed so that it will receive less harm from five years of such treatment than it will in one winter in the same climate if it is subjected to a continuous heat of 75 degrees.

"There are a lot of little common sense ideas," continued the dealer, "that must be used in the proper care of a piano. If it is an upright piano, stand it across the corner of the room. Its tone will be muffled if you place it close to the wall. Don't let the sun shine on the piano, particularly through glass, for this often blisters the varnish. Very frequently, the troublesome buzzing noises that are heard are outside of the piano. This may be the mica in the stove or a hanging lamp near by, or some little ornament on the piano. Pins and the like often find their way into the sounding board of a horizontal piano and become very troublesome.

"To prevent the dull, smoky appearance of new pianos use a fine sponge, tepid water and Castile soap. Go over the case a little at a time and dry it with a chamois skin wrung as dry as possible out of water. A polish of raw linseed oil (two parts), alcohol and best vinegar (one part each) may be used with good results on old pianos. Care must be taken, though, to use but a little at a time and to rub this off. Bruises can be taken off by rubbing with powdered pumice-stone and water."—*Mail and Express.*

THE FARM.

Bee Larvæ for Fish Bait.

Anyone having a choice lot of young chicks he wishes to force and make happy, ought to give them the drone larvæ. After cutting out the drone comb I shave off the caps, and by tapping the under side of the piece the young drones easily drop out. The hens will begin by eating, and showing the chicks how to eat the white ones; but after awhile they will take them when they are almost old enough to crawl out of their cells. If there can be any thing more nutritious I should like to find it. Moth worms are also as good. Both of them make the best conceivable fish bait. If you are near a trout stream or lake, don't give it away, and your friends will wonder why you are catching all the trout. At Oakland, Md., boys spend their Saturdays looking for hornets' nests, and sell them for 50 cents and $1 a piece. In 1888 a party of three fished in Browning's Lake three days without catching a trout. My brother and myself arrived and found that they were not biting, but on the second day we were able to procure a hornet's nest about the size of my two fists, and between the hours of 5 and 7 a. m. we took ninety fine trout. We had other bait, but as soon as the larvæ gave out the fish refused the other bait. I would have given a dollar then for a handful of drones. Trout refuse the larvæ after the wings are formed.—*Gleanings in Bee Culture.*

Don't think Disease—Displace it with Exercise of the Curative Virtues.

Take an active interest in it, occupy your mind with it, talk about it, think about it, stick to it—these are requisities for thrift in business, in education, or whatever you engage in. So, too, sickness thrives according to the amount of time, talk and attention it receives. Many ailing or "complaining" persons spend most of their time retailing their various manifold and wonderful symptoms; their number is indeed infinite, and they grow as they are cultivated; that is, thought of, felt again and again, talked about and feared, and dreaded. What a miserable crop to be growing! If you wish to substitute a crop of health, strength, vigor, enjoyment, stop thinking and talking your ailments. Shut down upon them as far as possible. This you may find as difficult as to keep down the weeds in an empty field. You must therefore take pains to get into the foregrounds other thoughts, feelings, interests, talk and employment.

There are many light jobs about a garden or farm that an invalid can do, and would much better be doing, if possible, than let the mind dwell on symptoms. Shelling peas and beans, sorting of berries, even easy weeding in shaded places, gathering seeds and labelling, etc.—anything rather than dwelling on your disease, with fear and dread. Let your friends know you would rather not talk about it, and stick to your resolution. See that some pleasant reading is at hand. Make the most of good company, riding and good food. Remember how many things are made to enjoy, and look up, and think about the resources of health and strength. Study the plants about you, have them brought in if you are unable to go out. Find their curative virtues. Sit in the morning sunshine. Distinguish the bird-notes, and add in some way to the stock of family interest, conversation and entertainment. In short, strive to banish thought of disease and symptoms. This is simply living in the spirit of the Gospel, being "saved by faith" in the goodness of God, and of His world.—*Louise M. Fuller.*

Flies.

One of the most aggravating things to a person of good sense is the method which people employ in dealing with flies. They are useful scavengers, and if they would limit their inroads to places where they are needed, they would do good service. Unfortunately, however, when they once come in force, they often pervade the most cleanly homes. One of the most successful methods in dealing with flies is to hang up some herb or plant which is offensive to them, and not offensive to the residents of the house.

Sweet clover, which grows plentifully by the roadside, and has a faint, pleasant odor, unobjectionable to any one not afflicted with hay fever, has the reputation of being abhorred by flies. A few sprays of this plant hung in the parlor, or a cluster of the sweet, white tassel-like heads as a bouquet on the centre-table, will do more work in ridding the room of flies than a dozen fly-traps. There is considerable doubt whether any trap which contains molasses, sugar or any such material does not draw in more flies than it kills, besides being a disgusting and uncleanly way of meeting this nuisance.

There is no hope of dealing successfully with flies unless scrupulous cleanliness is the rule of the house. The pertinacity of flies has been celebrated by Homer, and an Englishman, taking advantage of this trait, has just invented a curious kind of window-pane, which is a successful means of driving flies out of the room, as well as preventing their ingress. It is well-known that flies climb upward from the bottom of the pane to the top. This summer window-pane has the top cut off about an inch, so that when the fly crawls up he naturally goes outdoors. In order to prevent the ingress of flies by the same plan, a small piece of pane coming down from the top overlaps this space, but does not touch the pane below, leaving just room for the fly to crawl up and out. To come in he must crawl down the pane, which a fly seldom or never does.

It is not intended that the permanent window-pane should be arranged in this way, but that a window-pane with frames of this kind should be substituted for summer use. As a preventive of flies, the wire window and door frame has certain advantages, but it excludes the light and air to some extent as well as flies, and is altogether an ugly contrivance.

— A certain fat old rooster cannot run very fast and is too heavy to fly, but he is ambitious and voracious and does not like to have a rapid old hen get ahead of him at feeding time—hence he grasps her tail feathers in his bill and pulls back while she waves her wings and drags him along after her.

— Plenty of men have good land and are good farmers in other respects, and take pains to keep their farms free from weeds, but let the fence-corners and roadsides remain unsightly, scattering weed seeds over their own and neighboring farms. Even in sections, as in this, where time on the road tax is allowed for mowing the roadsides, many do not take advantage of it. What is needed, in justice to neighbors, is a strict enforcement of the law compelling the cutting of all noxious weeds before seed has formed.

— Ippos's recent hints on "Happiness for Horses" confirms my long-time experience with box-stalls kept well-littered and only cleared when the manure or more headroom is required. The liberty and economy of the arrangement I like, especially in winter. In summer there is likely to be more or less heat from fermentation, which is objectionable for the animal's feet. This can be prevented by liberal use of dry soil. The box-stall is usually a prolific source of flies, and unless the horse's comfort be looked after he will be made frantic by them. My stables are so near the house that the flies bred are a nuisance or would be were it not for a flock or two of lively chickens which are given free range all day while the horses are out. They destroy every fly and larva.—*Hollister Sage.*

— That slophole! Which one? That one under your kitchen window where you throw slop out at a broken pane; that one by the kitchen door; that one within a few feet of your own or your neighbor's well. You are cultivated, refined. You would not drink out of the slopbucket; oh, no! But how good it tastes when having percolated through a few feet of earth you draw it out of the well? You would not shoot, stab or poison your own or your neighbor's children. Horrible! But that slophole will poison them with fever, diphtheria or some other deadly disease. Are you guiltless? They would not be in half the danger were you to attempt to shoot them. You would be too excited to aim straight, or they could run away. But that slophole breeds death day and night: from it there is no escape. Banish it at once! Do not murder your friends with that slophole and then blame God!

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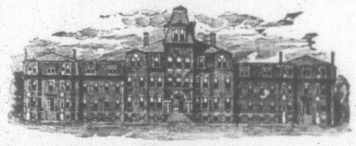

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