



My Lady's Garden

"EAT ONIONS IN MAY and the doctors can play."

"What!" exclaims some one. "Have you nothing finer in the way of poetry wherewith to greet this month of mignonette, star of Bethlehem, anemones, rosemary, apple blossoms, jessamine, flowering currant, lilacs, and a world of other fragrant things, than a tribute to the onion?"

I know! I know! But I am not writing of My Lady's flower garden, fair as it is. The garden I mean has gooseberry bushes along the wall, and homely things like sage and parsley bordering the paths. The brown loam to the right is the potato patch.

"We raise all our own vegetables," says My Lady, proudly. "Last season was a poor one for potatoes; we had none to sell, but plenty for our own use." And potatoes two dollars a bushel!

There is nothing prettier than the leaves, curling and crisp, of that head of lettuce, unless it be the white and green of the slim onions, or the red of the tender radishes. It is an aristocrat of a vegetable, the onion. History mentions the fact that it was an object of worship in Egypt, 2000 B.C. Alexander the Great brought it from Egypt to Greece in the belief that its breath excited martial ardour in his men. A good thing to know in war time!



Beauty and Health

"MY DAUGHTER IS NO ATHLETE," beamed the proud mother on her old fashioned but distinguished guest—and on the rest of us. "She dearly loves the quiet home atmosphere; in fact, she's happier with a book than anywhere else. It gives me solid satisfaction to know that she enjoys to the full the leisure denied to me in my girlhood." Whereupon

the guest aired her views, which were of a nature to astonish us all.

"The home and hearth girl can overdo it," she said with authority. "Too much comfort is a clog, and a clog is one of the little devils—excuse me, the little foxes that spoil the vine. An uninterrupted leisure programme conduces to excess avoirdupois, laziness, lack of vivacity. Girls need to get out, stretch up. The country-bred woman of thirty, forty, fifty has a better physique than her city cousin, can do more work without tiring, more walking without her muscles hurting her. Not a quarter of our lovely women—and our Canadian women are lovely—have backs to be proud of. Ask the lady physician, ask the specialist, if you think I exaggerate when I say two-thirds of our women and girls suffer from backache. We've gotten a long way from the great idea of beauty, too. Women are careless about health—fifty per cent. need to have their teeth attended to, another fifty per cent. need to consult the oculist, and where is the soft shininess of the hair that is a thing of beauty and a joy forever? It is as important that a girl learns how to stand, how to walk, how to breathe, how to make the best of her body, as it is that her mind be trained, her spiritual nature developed. The time to reduce flesh is before we put it on (by reducing our food), and the time to remedy a physical or moral defect is before it shows, not after. There," beginning to draw on her gloves, "I've given a whole health lecture without meaning to. What is that? Women are taking better care of themselves than they used to? My opinion is we do a fair amount of fooling and fussing over ourselves, but as to real care-taking, we've forgotten how."



Economic Independence

THE BEAUTIFUL BUSINESS OF LIVING is made up largely of love, religion, work, and ambition. Of these the first two count most with a woman. She may change her view-point and her way of life as the wheels of progress bear her on, but not her nature. Love has always meant, and perhaps will always mean, the world to her. She has always been—and let us pray will always be—the faith keeper of the race. This being so, we have no right to expect from her the same zeal for work, business, money-making, which distinguishes man. To her is committed the higher things; even her ambition is rooted in some tender spot in her nature.

"But look at our army of women workers!"

cries one. To be sure women can work well. They are not shirkers. Why do they enter business life? Because they need the money; because their loyalty, patriotism, or filial affection brings pressure to bear; because they want to show what they can do; because they desire to enhance their charms with more finery than father can afford; because of better matrimonial chances; because of a dislike for household work; because of a particular ambition; because of a belief in emancipation of their sex through economic independence. For these and many more reasons, good and sufficient reasons, beautiful reasons, women enter the arena.



Reading for the Young

A MOTHER ENQUIRES anxiously as to whether or not the reading of the fairy tale by children is a foolishness and waste of time? She says, "If I thought it put ideas and nonsense in the heads of my girls and boys, or hindered the preparation of the part they are to take in the workaday world by-and-by, (we are poor people) I would bar it on the instant."

Oh, leave the poor fairy tale, the dear fairy tale, alone, please. A few dreams are not going to hurt your girls and boys, or mine. The workaday world is a grand place, but our children do not belong in it yet. The ingle-nook and the fairy tale for them. After all, a fairy tale is only a heavenly homily of adventure. What if we are poor people! What if a strenuous life does await our children! Imagination is all the more necessary. The offspring of the rich can have toys and treats, travel, and change of scene; the others cannot. But what of that when Aladdin's Lamp is common property? The prose of life, the hard facts of life, will be along soon enough. Leave the boys and girls their fairy tales, their world where every one comes to his or her own, where right never fails to triumph over wrong, where wicked giants are worsted and where love is always true. "But they will believe all this!" you cry. Very well! That belief will be a lovely thing to carry with them into the strenuous world you speak of. They will do their work all the better for it; there is usually the whisper of an angel in the dream of innocence.



Latch-Strings Out

A HOUSEWIFE DOES NOT NEED to be especially clever to bring the formal dinner, luncheon, or reception to a successful conclusion. She has plenty of time to plan her affair, plenty of assistance in carrying the plan out. She has the florist, the caterer, and—sometimes—the public entertainer to help her through. But it takes "a born hostess" to welcome the impromptu guest in such a manner that he will not feel he is intruding, to go about making a place for him at the hearth and table with an ease and lack of perturbation which make him feel at home on the instant.

"I don't know how it is that my wife gets so flustered and upset to the extent she does if I chance to bring home a friend or customer to dinner without due warning," complained one husband to another. "Now, over at your place it doesn't appear to make any difference. Your wife seems to have everything ready." The other smiled.

"Not everything; we often have to practise what we call 'family forbearance,' which means giving our helping of this or that, generally the dish we like best, to the stranger within the gates. But her welcome is ready first, last, always. And the welcome is the chief thing, don't you think?"

Of course it is. Once the born hostess has shaken the hand of a visitor, she has made that visitor one of themselves—which is the greatest compliment of all. Informal hospitality has become almost a lost art. We modern housewives seem too busy to practise it. We entertain by rote, count up how many we owe, socially, and set about discharging the indebtedness in a business way. "I've gone out so much, I really must do something!" is a common expression. One hates to think that hospitality has come to this. It is a beautiful thing, a heartening thing, this hospitality when it is real and spontaneous. So we make a plea for it. Go as far as you like with your engraved invitations and elaborate preparations, but hold fast to enough of the old-time pleasure and privilege of entertaining to keep your hearts warm to your friends. Life will be the fuller for it.



Live and Let Live

WE HAVE SAID BEFORE, and will say again, that the woman who has not enough of the sporting instinct in her to take a few of her husband's virtues for granted has no business meddling with matrimony. "If I were back where I was a few years ago, a young man in love with a pretty girl, I wouldn't talk foolishness, at least altogether," said the man of moods. "Some of the discussions would be along practical lines and very much to the point. For instance, instead of the reiterated 'You love me? You are sure I can make you happy?' etc., I would look squarely into her blue or brown eyes, or whatever colour they are, and put this momentous question: 'Will you agree (as I will) to cut out the eternal explanation?' This having to give a reason for everything, to explain words and ways simply because one of the firm of two is autocratic enough to demand it, is humiliating in the extreme. Yes, indeed, a wife can make, for a man, a heaven on earth—or the other place—and we ought to take precautions. Explanations may not be the death of love, but they certainly rub the down off the peach in short order. I don't know how it is with women, but a man hankers to be taken for granted." Wasn't it Disraeli who advised, "Never complain, never explain."



The Gossip's Bridle

WHEN WE READ in the English papers that a Zeppelin had dared to drop a bomb in the vicinity of the Church of Walton-on-Thames in the hope, presumably, of blowing up that ancient edifice, we called to mind one summer day when we were taken there to view, not its stained glass, or its towers, or its tombs, but a grotesque contraption which reposed—and still reposes—in the grey old vestry, yclept, "The Gossip's Bridle." We looked at it curiously as one looks at any relic of the good old days, which are good chiefly because they lie so far behind us. "To be sure," we said, "there were gossiping men and women then as there are still, and with no court to give redress, for like maybe this bridle was not without its uses." But wait. Growing accustomed to the gloom of the place, we began to spell out the musty chronicle appended to the article. It ran as follows: "This singular and subtle construction was devised and perfected by one connected with this church who lost a valuable property through the instrumentality of a gossiping wife. When adjusted, one parte enters the mouthe and prevents articulation. This parte connects by a wide strap with the wooden rest covering the back of the heade, while another strap comes over the heade and browe, dividing in two parts above the nose, thus connectinge the face strap with the bridle on eache side of the mouthe, making it secure." The date 1633 A.D. comes next, followed by this couplet:

"Chester presents Walton with a bridle,
To curb women's tongues that talk too idle."

A sorry harness, for a sorry use, and a sorry couplet, you will agree. Not a word about the tongues of men, which doubtless wagged busily enough. It was a man's world then, more of a man's world than it is to-day. A stupid world. This harness is proof of it. Gossip is a vice which no steel and leather cures. This grey old Walton-on-Thames, instead of sheltering this bridle, would have done better to busy itself teaching its women the full meaning of Solomon's beautiful words, "The law of kindness is on her lips." We are glad the Germans did not get Walton-on-Thames, though they would be welcome to "The Gossip's Bridle" reposing there.



Invalids Are Out of Style

ON OUR ASKING A DEFINITION of the word health from the slip of a girl deep in "Georgianna of the Rainbow," she looked up, pondered awhile, then exclaimed, "Oh, it is something that makes you look lovely to folk and folk look lovely to you." A true finding, and a feminine one!

When we put the same query to that jolly and rollicking individual, the boy of the house, he had nothing to say about looks, lovely or otherwise. "Health is what puts the pep in us," he answered on the instant, "makes us race and tear, climb and jump. If you haven't got it, you don't know you're living, and if you have it, everything comes easy—even lessons." Just so!