

HOME INTERESTS.

Conducted by HELENE.

Good wishes have been given and received; fond remembrances have further proved an undying friendship; compliments have been exchanged. And now? Now is the time for resolutions. Not those hastily made in the enthusiasm of the moment, nor yet half-hearted ones; but taking lessons from our past and knowing the weakest spots we should be able to wage a fiercer warfare against the snares which have blinded us to the remembrance of past good resolutions so that when 1905 will have rolled away, though we may not see the perfect accomplishment of what we had hoped to do, we will, at least, have the comforting assurance of having done our best.

FASHIONS.

The use of feathered muffs with handsome evening wraps is a decidedly attractive fashion. One white ostrich muff, made for this purpose, is trimmed with ermine tails, a fringe of them falling over a frill of lace finishing the lower edge.

Another is made of light blue tips, the tiniest imaginable, each tip not being more than two inches long. This has frills of light blue Mechlin lace at the hand openings, and such a charming object is rarely seen. But it is so perishable that it is hardly a thing for anyone who has not several others of the same sort; and one cannot wonder that it does not find a ready sale.

The ever popular coque feathers, with their greenish iridescence need no trimming, and have no equal for wear. Rain and damp do not effect them in the least. A muff and stole will look well as long as they are worn, and for general use nothing is smarter.

Muffs and stoles of black ostrich feathers are very modish for those wearing mourning. The black of the ostrich is dull, with not a glimmer of brightness such as one finds in plumes and combines with the deepest mourning much better than any fur that can be bought. These feathers are almost as serviceable as fur, as they are so well dyed that they scarcely ever become rusty. For mourning a very flat muff is preferred, and the stole should be broad and long.

A stunning collar is made of ostrich tips of a brownish gray. In front it crosses like a fichu, drawing to the back, where it fastens and ends in a short postillion. Around the edges are three scalloped ruffles of silk of the same color. The muff to match is voluminous, indeed, made with no interlining, and is gathered at the top like a bag, upon a wide ribbon. A ruffle of the same scalloped silk finishes it all around.

Dainty footwear is the essence of coquetry and this season it bids fair to be the acme of extravagance. Even the woman of moderate income is likely to be tempted to reckless extravagance in the matter of boots and shoes and slippers, and for the few to whom expense is not a vital issue there are possibilities of shoemakers' bills calculated upon the blood of the frugal and thrifty.

The black boot, in patent leather, calfskin, colt or kid, is still the staple article for street wear, and economical women will still wear black patent or kid slippers or shoes in the house, but if the casual observer concludes from this that the footwear problem stands where it did, let him go to a smart shoemaker's and have his eyes opened.

For walking and ordinary street wear the laced boot of French calf skin, of colt, or of patent leather with dull leather tops is still correct, but the exaggerated heaviness and extension of sole and the excessive breadth and clumsiness of toe have disappeared. The toe of the walking boot is far from the absurd toothpick lines, but it is moderately pointed, and the sole, while heavy enough for comfortable walking, projects only a little and is not clumsy. The Cuban heel of reasonable height is the most fashionable for a boot of this type.

Buttoned boots, even in the heavy walking boots, are fancied by some women, and provision is made for this demand, although generally speaking the button models are reserved for dressy afternoon street boots.

These afternoon boots, if intended

for walking, may have much the same lines as the regulation walking boot, the same weight of sole and vamping of the same leather, but they put on rather than lace, the heels are usually higher than those of the walking boot, and in many instances the tops are of cloth matching the frock.

Nothing else is so neat and trim for street wear as the high laced or buttoned boot, but there is a large feminine contingent unwilling to give up the comfort of the low shoe with the coming of cold days, and spats worn with low shoes are the solution of this problem. But the well dressed woman does not consider for a moment the idea of buying a ready-made pair of black spats and wearing them over any pair of low shoes with any costume.

Her spats are made to order and fitted as carefully as a boot, and she has a pair to match each frock or to harmonize with it. Even when black spats for general utility are a necessity, it will pay to have them fitted and made by a clever shoemaker, for the spat is, at best, an awkward thing.

TIMELY HINTS.

A small jar should be kept in the bathroom to hold all scraps of toilet soap. After a number of pieces have accumulated, pour alcohol or cologne over them, and a jelly will form when the soap dissolves, which is excellent for shampooing the hair. If alcohol is used pour a few drops of lavender in to give the jelly an agreeable perfume.

If a bowl or deep plate of quicklime is kept in a damp closet, it will, it is said, prevent clothes that are hung there from becoming mildewed. The lime should be renewed when it becomes slack.

To make steak tender, place it on a large platter on which have been poured three or four tablespoonfuls of olive oil and half as much vinegar. Let the steak lie in this for four hours before cooking, turning it every half hour.

If pads of cotton batting, covered with cheesecloth and having lavender flowers and a little orris powder spread between the layers of batting, are placed in the closets or drawers in which bed linen is kept, the linen will always retain a delicate and fragrant odor.

If moths settle in a carpet they can be destroyed by wringing a coarse towel out of water, spreading smoothly over the carpet, and ironing dry. The steam kills the moths, without injuring the carpet. Care should be taken not to press hard enough to lay the nap.

A most healing salve can be made by mixing lard and corn starch into a paste and applying as needed. It has healed when other remedies have all failed.

To renew old laces if stained or greasy put in sweet oil and let stand for several hours. Fill a big bottle with water, sew the lace to some muslin and wrap it around the bottle carefully to avoid creases. Be sure to touch every little point. If lace is very fine, cover it with thin muslin or net on the outside.

As soon as the barking cough begins in cases of croup give one drop of aromatic ammonia in a dessert spoonful of water. Repeat every fifteen minutes until relief is obtained, or until a physician can be sent for.

Charcoal is the best and safest antiseptic known for the stomach. It is not a drug. It carries all impurities out of the system, and renders the stomach and breath sweet and pure. It also clears and improves the complexion.

To improve green peas put the pods into a pot, cover and boil thoroughly; then strain and put the peas into the same water and boil tender. With the butter, salt and pepper add a small pinch of salt.

THE DRESSING JACKET HABIT.

I really believe that many a woman misses half the fun of life by having acquired the dressing jacket habit. Many a woman associates with her family entirely in undress. She sits around from one day's end to another without being properly dressed. She comes to breakfast in a saque; she spends her morning in that rig; at noon she faces a patient husband and her easily influenced children without the slightest change

of toilette; and at night, there she is again. If the door-bell rings, there is a grand rush and she hurries into something in which she is fit to be seen. Theoretically, she loves her family more than all the rest of the world. Practically, she does not respect them enough to keep herself properly dressed when with the members of it. Comfort? Well, I do not believe there is any need of a woman being uncomfortable in a decent waist and skirt. A woman who has this undress habit soon feels that she cannot wear her corset, and then her figure takes on lines far from pleasing. She sits so much that she grows fat and clumsy. Her husband cannot admire her, albeit love is blind. Her children cannot help contrasting her slovenliness with the tidiness of other mothers; and, although they may turn to her, they wish she were pretty and well dressed like some other woman who is far wiser.

Isn't it a pleasure to be able to run to the mail box, to go to the corner without the process of dressing? Isn't it to the advantage of the family exchequer to be able to attend to the family marketing? It is fun to run on errands, it is fun to be young enough to go, it is fun to be always ready. A woman who twists up her hair any way and slips on a saque because there is no one there but her nearest and dearest, will have no one to blame but herself if her nearest and dearest takes a fancy to a less slovenly woman. We all detest a man forever in his shirt sleeves, and we are all to find fault with his carelessness if he tries us too far in that direction, but some of us give men reason for reprisal.

THE BUSINESS WOMAN.

Frequently when a girl enters business she thinks of it as a temporary thing, not as a career or a profession. She takes it merely as a means of earning a living until she marries, and she gives to it half-hearted, indifferent attention. There is no harm in looking forward to marriage "with the right person when the right time comes," as grandmother used to say, but you should remember that if you are a poor worker you will be a poor home maker. You must realize that by developing your best powers of mind, by learning regular habits of work, self discipline and concentration, you will be gaining what will be as useful to you in home life as in business. It is natural to wish for a home of your own, but you will be badly prepared to make it a pleasant or comfortable abiding place if you are inefficient, lazy, careless or undisciplined.

RECIPES.

Candied Pineapple—Peel the pineapple, take out the "eyes," and slice thin. Weigh and boil until clear in a syrup made of half the weight of the fruit in granulated sugar and just enough water to moisten this slightly. The juice from the fruit will supply any liquid that might be lacking. When clear remove with a fork and lay on platters set in the sun to dry.

Creamed Sardines—Melt one tablespoonful of butter and add half a pint of cream, three tablespoonfuls of breadcrumbs, four finely chopped hard boiled eggs, a box of boneless sardines, without the skins, and a large saltspoonful of paprika. Serve on hot buttered toast.

Biscuit Tortoni—Boil one cupful of sugar and one-fourth cupful boiling water together until the syrup spins a thread, pour over the beaten yolks of six eggs, return to fire and cook over hot water until mixture coats the spoon. Beat until cold and add one teaspoonful each orange and vanilla extract and a pint double cream beaten solid. Then add one half cupful each of powdered macaroons; turn into a freezer and pack in ice and salt for six hours; line little fancy baskets with lace paper doilies and fill with the tortoni, garnish with burnt almonds and trim with holly.

Flaming Apples—This attractive dish is very easily prepared. Select rather tart apples of uniform size, pare, core, and stew gently in sugar and water until tender but unbroken, as the beauty of the entire is that the shape of the apples be preserved. Place each apple in a ramikin or individual serving dish and fill the

centres with red currant jelly. Boil the syrup down thick and pour over the apples. Pour a teaspoonful of brandy over the apples as they are carried to the table and ignite just as they are to be served.

Fruit Charlotte—Line a mould with lady fingers and sections of oranges; soak one-half package of gelatine in one cup of cold water for half an hour; pour in one and a half cup of hot water, and stir until dissolved; then add one cup of sugar and set on ice until it begins to thicken. Beat the whites of three eggs to a stiff froth that does not separate; mix lightly with gelatine; flavor with extract of orange and pour into a mould. Put into the refrigerator until ready for use.

ETHEL'S ANSWER

It was Christmas eve, and the sleepy little village of Preston had awakened from its usual indifference to assume the holiday spirit. The pretty stone church on the hill had been occupied all day by the young ladies of the parish, whose busy fingers had so skillfully decorated it with the loads of pines and cedars brought by the young men from the snow-covered woods, and by night it was a bower of rustic beauty.

When the last touch had been given to the cave of Bethlehem, almost hidden under a profusion of green, the happy workers took their departure. As they passed into the dark, gloomy street, the snow came down in a riotous flurry, so that Ethel Blandford gladly accepted for herself and several friends an invitation to ride home in Frank Marshall's new cutter.

Ethel was the most accomplished and beautiful girl of the village, and the daughter of a widowed mother, whose inheritance had been spent by a profligate husband. When the change came from affluence to poverty, Mrs. Blandford gave up her elegant mansion and moved into a small house. Her health declined, and Ethel took entire charge of the family and the education of her brothers and sisters. Mrs. Blandford's income was a mere pittance compared to what it had been a few years previous, so that it was scarcely sufficient to make "both ends meet." With the assistance of Ethel and by making over the many garments the little ones required, she managed to keep the wolf from the door, although his growls were sometimes not far away.

Ethel was a great favorite in the community, for she was kind to all and interested herself in everything tending to promote the happiness of her neighbors. She was a devoted Catholic, and her greatest pleasure was to be present at the daily Mass. But even this comfort she denied herself rather than permit her household duties to devolve upon her delicate mother. When sacrifices were to be made, Ethel was always expected to make them, nor had she ever disappointed the family.

For several years the rich and aristocratic Frank Marshall had been a visitor at the Blandford cottage, where he spent at least two evenings each week. Ethel gave him no reason to hope that she cared more for him than she did for several other young men who came frequently to her mother's. She did not dare ask herself whether she loved him or whether he loved her. He had not announced his love, and she did not suppose he would care to marry a poor girl. Mrs. Blandford realized that he was in love with Ethel, and while she would not object to the match, she regretted that he was an agnostic, as her own husband had been.

Ethel alighted from the cutter at her own door, thanked Frank for his thoughtful kindness, and at once entered the house to begin her second day's labor. She must hang a few wreaths on the walls of their humble little parlor, dress the Christmas tree and have the children's clothing ready for them to put on to go to the 5 o'clock Mass. When she had finished her labors and was taking a little rest, Frank was shown into the room. He was always a welcome guest, being bright, light-hearted and kind. Although by far

the wealthiest man in the village, he was considerate to all, even to the priest, whom he visited in case of sickness or distress. Ethel noticed as he entered the room that his face was not lit up with the light that usually played around his handsome features, and she imagined he was not at his ease. Before she had time to try to account for the change in the manner of her friend he advanced towards her and handed her a beautiful bouquet of half-blown roses. Knowing her appreciation of flowers and their language, which she thoroughly understood, he awaited a reply, but was disappointed when Ethel coolly expressed her thanks and proceeded to exhibit a few of the many little presents she had made for the children. He made a poor effort to be interested, but did not dare to mention the object of his visit. He wanted a Christmas present for himself, the most valuable she could give—her love. Now he was in despair. If she cared for him, the blush of the half-blown roses that he gave her would have brought a deeper tint to her cheeks and a brighter light to her eye. He recited in a low tone the lines of Wordsworth:

To me the meaneft flower that blows can give Thoughts that often lie too deep for tears,

and added: "There are some thoughts that lie too deep for tears, but too deep for words. Do you cherish any such? If so, can you not find a flower that will express them as I hoped to have mine revealed by the unfolded rose?"

Ethel handed him a leaf plucked from an oak geranium, and quietly but firmly replied: "Flowers are of ten kind messengers, and spare us from telling our friends things that seem cruel. But it would be far more cruel to deceive them. You remember the line:

"I must be cruel, only to be kind?" Frank said a sad "good-by" and left the house. He loved Ethel devotedly. He had not doubted that his proposal would be accepted, and it was not until that bit of geranium had been given him that his hope vanished. Placing the leaf in his pocketbook, he drove home, not yet willing to abandon his suit.

Christmas dawned brightly for the little ones at Blandford's. They went to early Mass, and were then given the presents, most of them Ethel's handiwork. During the day a letter came from Frank, with a valuable present. He asked that the leaf of geranium might be exchanged for a rose leaf, so that Christmas might not pass without giving him a ray of hope.

Ethel replied to the note and returned the present. To do so caused many tears to fall upon her cheeks for she now realized the fact that she loved Frank. But he was an agnostic, and with her unbelief was a sin. She was fully determined never to marry an infidel. She knew how dark had been her mother's life because of her husband's infidelity, and how sharp was the arrow that pierced her heart when he died without the last preparation for the long journey into eternity. She did not tell Frank why she declined his request to exchange the symbol of friendship for one of hope, but she made it quite clear to him that she would never alter her decision.

That evening Frank called at Mrs. Blandford's and urged Ethel to become his wife. His protestations of love were in vain, and when he forced her to tell him the cause of her refusal she kindly informed him that she would never marry an unbeliever, although she admitted that she loved him.

Frank received his refusal as thousands of others have done and will do until the end of time. The light of his life had suddenly been extinguished, and he never expected to enjoy another happy day. A few days later he left town, scarcely knowing where his wanderings would take him. After spending a few days in New York, without for a moment forgetting the weight that crushed his energies and robbed him of peace, he sailed for Europe, determined to drown his sorrows in the gaieties of Paris.

One evening, about the middle of January, Mrs. Blandford called Ethel to her room and told her many things concerning the family that she had never heard before. Finally she informed her that the little pittance saved from her once handsome fortune had been spent, and that the mortgage on her little home was about to be foreclosed by a Mr. McGregor, a Scotch money lender. Ethel tried to console her mother, and said she would seek employment as a clerk in a store or as a school teacher, and if she failed in these, she would become a housemaid or

make any sacrifice to save her mother and the children from actual want. "Ethel," replied Mrs. Blandford, "you can do better than that. You can save us this house, and by renting a few rooms I can take care of the children until James is old enough to help us."

"Tell me how, mother, and I'll do it quickly."

"Not only can you help us, but you can secure an elegant home for yourself," added Mrs. Blandford sorrowfully. "I care nothing for an elegant home, mother," responded Ethel, becoming alarmed as she imagined her mother intended to insist upon her marrying Frank Marshall. "But tell me how I can save this house for you. Don't keep me in suspense a moment longer, please."

"I will tell you, my daughter," commenced Mrs. Blandford, "but in the first place, let me assure you that I do not wish you to do anything that is disagreeable to you. But for your own comfort and for the comfort of the children, I'll let you read this letter and decide for yourself. Here is a letter from Mr. McGregor."

Ethel took the letter and read it, while the blood surged to her cheeks. It was short and business-like, saying: "The mortgage is due and must be paid. However, I wish to marry, and if your daughter will become my wife I'll cancel the indebtedness."

A few minutes passed before Ethel could control her emotions.

"If you think it is for the best, mother," she said, "I'll marry this man, but, of course, you must tell him that I shall never love him." "No, my child, I would not have you do so for the world unless you are satisfied. I think it would be wise for you to accept his offer, but if you are not willing I'll write Mr. McGregor and tell him his offer is declined. He is an honorable man and calls himself a Catholic. You might bring him back to the Church and thus help him as well as ourselves."

Ethel placed her arm around her mother's neck, and between her sobs said:

"If it is the will of God, I will marry him, for grace will be given me to bear the burden. Write to Mr. McGregor and tell him that I do not and probably never shall love him, but that, trusting in heaven, I consent to become his wife and will do my duty."

So deeply was Mrs. Blandford troubled on account of her financial embarrassment that she did not realize what it cost her daughter to make the sacrifice. In fact, she thought it was really for Ethel's happiness as well as for the comfort of her other children that she had permitted Mr. McGregor's offer to be even considered. She wrote the money lender that his offer had been accepted, and that Ethel would name the day for the marriage, which must take place in the church.

Ethel spent many hours before the Blessed Sacrament, laying her sorrows at the feet of Our Lord, and begging the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

When Mr. McGregor called at Mrs. Blandford's and asked for Ethel, the poor girl, with an aching heart, entered the parlor, fearing her strength would not be sufficient to enable her to endure the fearful ordeal.

The money-lender, finding his reception so cold, did not tarry long. He, in a business-like manner, told her he had come to ask her to name the day for the marriage, and to make any arrangements that were necessary. He told her that they would have no unnecessary expenses, and that they would be married in the church, as he was a Catholic.

Ethel was so nervous that she could hardly talk to the old gentleman, and asked him to give her a week to decide. He was so infatuated with her beauty that he was willing to promise almost anything she asked, and soon took his departure.

Ethel was truly a heroine, for she was making a sacrifice not for a few years, but probably for life. She was brave, but not strong enough to carry the load she had taken upon her. She was willing to suffer to spare her mother and sisters and brothers, from suffering, but, in spite of her willingness, her cheeks faded, her eyes grew dim, and she became ill. Her mother was alarmed, but still did not read the secret buried in her daughter's heart, on which filial devotion had laid a load heavy enough to crush it. Six months passed, and Ethel had not yet named the day for the sacrifice. Finally, when Mr. McGregor would wait no longer, she referred him to her mother.

(Continued on Page 6.)

Dear Boys and Girls:

I know you are all so content. I am anxious Santa Claus brought a letter to mail your letters today. A very happy New Year.

The following was written by a little girl who enjoys confidence in Santa Claus. Her letter will testify:

I want a doll and carriage and tea table and stove and a blackboard and a book and a picture book and a and that is all. My name is GEORGE.

Dear Aunt Becky:

We had a Christmas tree house. Uncle Jack dressed Santa Claus. The little believed it was Santa a awfully afraid. I got two pair of skates, a tuque and sides some nice things from the friends. I hope you and wish you a happy New Year.

Autville.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am having a lovely time for Christmas a sleigh, moccasins, a book, a pair shoes, and lots of candy, a large yard and papa ma so I tell you I will be soon school opens again. I wish happy New Year.

Your little friend,

Ottawa.

Dear Aunt Becky:

We spent Christmas at. We had to drive four miles station. Uncle Ned came us with a lovely big wagon of horses. There was a of us, fourteen in all. You like to all be together the we do enjoy ourselves so house is a great big place rooms are so large we have room to play. There is a fireplace in the dining room whole log can be put in, a jolly to sit around and listen stories. We had a lovely tree, and grandma must h lot of work to fix it up a I guess this is long enough time.

Your friend,

Vanklees Hill.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I suppose you would like how I spent Christmas. My family gathering at our h grandma and aunts and un from the country, and so glad to see them. M got a toboggan and a book got a lovely dress, a doll ber ball, and I got skates for the rink, a bracelet boxes of candy. I would know what the other boys got.

St. Urban street, city.

A HEROIC BOY.

You boys don't want to you want to be true heroes Samuel Baker and General Let us then try to find true bravery is, and how brave.

Dr. Thomas Arnold was a boarding school when two old. His mother had taught kneel by his bedside every pray. He was put into a with forty or fifty other boys of them were bad boys, and were cowards. But Thom coward. In the midst of and confusion he quietly k by his cot to say his pray.

"See that young Pharis a big bully, and threw his him. The rest followed th they were afraid of the pillows were hurled at th young Christian. But h his prayer, and without a hake or remonstrance went This was repeated night. At length the boy had been taught to pray at h tered courage, one by on late Arnold's example, an than a month that dormito quiet at bedtime as a ch boys who did not pray