

others are gorgeously arrayed; miracles of seed and fruit growth, and many other equally-interesting facts in the history of vegetation. It will stimulate thoughtful readers to gain a better understanding of systematic botany, as well as of chemistry, geology and mineralogy; and altogether, to any intelligent and attentive student, will open up a marvellous field for investigation. The story is told in the writer's delightfully-taking manner, while the facts are stated with all the plainness and simplicity possible in a subject of the kind, purely technical and very learned words never being used where the very simplest language serves to make the matter clear. No scientific subject, perhaps, has ever been treated in a more charming fashion without losing something of the living truth which the "Story of Plants" brings out so luminously. It said little for the Canadian, or for the British public, that a writer like Grant Allen, who could tell, in such clear and delightful language, the great truths of nature, should be driven to make his living by writing poor fiction! Others of his scientific works are equally delightful and instructive reading, such as: "Flashlights of Nature," and "In Nature's Workshop," which latter appeared, originally, I think, in the "Strand Magazine."

And now, for the story of how I happened to read "The Story of the Plants" at this particular time. I had read, with much pleasure, several of the books belonging to the same series, and, on sending in a subscription for a year of the "Farmer's Advocate," on behalf of an acquaintance, the publishers kindly sent me the book as commission! Not bad remuneration, was it? Well, now, you see, if you are anxious to read this true fairy tale, you may do so very easily, by the like method. And Grant Allen's is not the only one of Newnes' "Library of Useful Stories," which contains, in small space and tells in clear language, many of nature's secrets of engrossing interest, and downright cash value to every farmer. Among them: "The Story of Germ Life: Bacteria;" of "The Weather;" of "The Stars;" of "Forest and Stream," and others are full of informative matter of the very highest educational value to everyone having eyes to see and ears to hear. L. S. L.

Lincoln Park, Nov. 12th, 1908.

The Servant Girl and Indoor Help Question.

Not only in Manitoba, but also in the whole of North America, there appears to be an absolute dearth of the necessary indoor help, and many people are at their wits' end to know what to do. Even in the large cities, where different conditions prevail than here, the ladies are adopting all sorts of expedients, both to induce girls to take service and to retain them in their houses. From a Milwaukee paper we learn that "some ladies are trying the experiment of having housemaid parties; that is, they give the maids the use of the house in which to entertain their friends for an evening. The rooms are decorated and refreshments served the same as if the mistress were entertaining," so that we on the prairies need no longer wonder why we cannot get any servants, perhaps being hardly yet prepared to make sufficient sacrifices. The universal education of the children and the consequent advent of women into many of the positions formerly open only to men is, of course, largely the cause of the trouble, and because, in addition, the present general prosperity of the people enables many girls to live at home without working, we are led to surmise that there is no immediate prospect of any decided change. That our farmers' wives are terribly handicapped, and that many of them are overtaxing their strength in the almost hopeless task of raising a family as well as doing the household work, has long been a patent fact to all observers. It is causing many otherwise successful farmers to think seriously of giving up their occupation, as being the only solution of the indoor-help problem.—[Boisevain Globe.

Domestic Economy.

DOUGHNUTS.

(Sent in by a reader.)

Now is the season for these toothsome cakes, and here is a first-class recipe: 1 cup sugar, 1 cup sweet milk, butter size of an egg, 2 eggs, a pinch salt, 2 teaspoonfuls baking powder. Cook in boiling lard; dust with powdered sugar.

CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING.

Two cups of suet, two of raisins, two of currants, a little citron, two of molasses, two of milk, two dessertspoonfuls of all kinds of spices, two cups of flour, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Put into the mould and boil three and one-half hours. Just before putting on the table pour two tablespoonfuls of brandy over it, and touch a match to it.

Sauce for the pudding: One cup of sugar, one-half cup of butter, worked together. Place tin on stove, leaving until the sugar begins to singe and is a dark brown. Stir in one cup boiling water, broken with two tablespoonfuls of flour,

blended smooth with a little cold water. This sauce is delicious and so easily made, the singed sugar giving a maple flavor.

EXCELLENT CHRISTMAS CAKE.

Three-fourths pound butter, one pound sugar (brown), one pound flour, two pounds currants, three pounds raisins (seeded), one-half pound citron, one-fourth pound almonds, eight eggs, one nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon, one wineglass of brandy. The raisins are better if soaked in brandy over night.

CELERY SLAW.

One-half head of cabbage, one bunch of celery, two hard-boiled eggs, all chopped fine. Mix with two teaspoonfuls sugar, two of mustard, one-half of pepper and salt. Moisten with vinegar.

The Children's Corner.

Planning a Christmas Present.



Little Florence is thinking very deeply, and at least one of her dumb companions wants to know what it is all about. Of course she will not tell him, for she is wondering what Christmas presents she can make for father, mother, baby Gerald, and her two dear dogs, Prince and Muggins. Prince is the noble fellow who looks as though he could almost speak, and Muggins is the spoiled pet on her knee. What kind of Christmas gifts would they like best? Prince cares most for a loving hug from his little mistress, and saucy Muggins will take whatever he can get, and probably even forget to say "Thank you" by a wag of his tail. Prince has a good right to love Florence, for he saved her life once when she fell into the river, and they have been great chums ever since. He does not trouble himself to be jealous of Muggins, who loves nobody but himself—although Florence would never believe you if you told her so. C. D.

Our Christmas Story Competition.

Well, children, you would have been sorry for me if you had seen me surrounded by piles of Christmas stories, trying to choose the best among so many that were good. Ontario sent in the most, but some of the other Provinces were also well represented. Several stories were too long—you know I warned you to send short ones. Perhaps we may publish them some other time, when we can give up the whole "Corner" to one guest. I quite agree with Grace Bennett, in thinking that "the nicest Christmas story is in the Bible," but you have that wonderful story in your hands already.

And now for the long list of prizewinners. You know that we offered one for each Province sending in at least two contributions. First on the list is Bernice Vida Cousins, Broadview Farm, Pendennis, Man. (aged 13). Her story is original, while the other competitors only sent clippings or copied stories; at least, no other original story won first place in any Province. Janet Waterman, Fraserville, Ont. (aged 15), wins the Ontario prize. Mae Smithers, Moosomin, N.W.T., is the prizewinner for that Territory. The British Columbia prize has been awarded to Alberta Balfour, Box 71, Langley, B.C. Amy C. Purdy, Wentworth Station, Chatham, N.S., wins

the Nova Scotia prize. As there was only one Quebec competitor, no prize was awarded. An extra prize has been awarded to Myrtle Sinclair, Independence, Alta.

The clipping sent in by Maud Jose is rather too "grown-up" for our "Corner," and those sent in by Winnifred Jackman and Myrtle Howson were also very good, but too long. Next in order of merit come Edna Stacey, Dena McLeod, Annie Gordon, Morley Malyon, Alma Noon, Ruby Borland, Marguerite Gibson, Mary Thornton, Olive Cousins, Christina Teskey, Margaret Veale, Gertrude Shearer, Susan Gould, Edna Malcolm, Lily Burns, Christie Shearer, Amy Rowan, Grace Bennett, Stanley Wright, H. D. Smithers, Beatrice Balfour, Beatrice Magwood, Pauline Sanderson, Mina Buchan, Leila Traver, Annie Bradley, Katie Porter, Samuel B. Swift, Maggie Bradley, and Ellie Taylor.

One of the prize stories will be published today, the others will appear as soon as we have room for them. Many of the clippings which did not take first place will appear from time to time in the "Corner." COUSIN DOROTHY.

A Christmas Story.

"And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

—Longfellow.

Sadie MacFee sat by the window, her face wore a perplexed look, and evidently she was thinking hard. She turned to a lady who was sitting beside her, and said, "Mother, I've been thinking; we want, as you know, to do something really nice at Christmas time for the Duncriefts. But you and father said we would have to sacrifice our own turkey, or whatever we were going to give, and I've been thinking Tom is a big enough turkey for twelve. Why not take our Christmas presents, dinner and tea—stock, lock and barrel—over to the Duncriefts, and live there for the day?"

Mrs. MacFee's face brightened. "Dear child," she said, "I've thought of that before, and was waiting for you to think the same. For my part, I think it would not only be right, but our duty to do it; but before deciding, we should first consult the others."

That night when the MacFee family had gathered round the stove, they talked long about the Duncriefts, who lived in a poor, tumbledown house in Court Row. Mr. Duncriff had fallen off the roof of a house he was helping to build, and had broken his arm, from the effects of which he was still suffering; and Jane, the oldest girl, was a cripple. The other three, Louise, Frank and Fred, were always ragged and dirty, although they made many attempts to be clean, their mother generally being away sewing—doing all she could to help provide for the family.

There was a lot of work to be done, both at home and at the Duncriefts, and only two days to do it in. Sadie and brother Bob scrubbed both houses from cellar to garret. Jennie and Hugh decorated them with the green vines of the pigeon-berry.

Poor Jane was almost wild with joy, for Sadie moved her bed from her room to an adjoining one, while she scrubbed it. Then they hung two pretty pictures, framed with pigeon-berry, up on the wall. All around the room, and all over the windows, ran the same pretty vine, with its bright red berries.

Then two nice feather pillows, a warm blanket and clean white spread were put on the bed, which had a new tick filled with fresh straw.

Although all had worked unceasingly, when Christmas day dawned their hearts were happy and expectantly glad, and when dinner time came, satisfaction reigned supreme.

Such a dinner! The Duncriefts were wild! Such turkey! Such cranberry, and, oh! such pudding!

Now, dear readers, just wait till I tell you how the MacFees managed to have such a nice time. Sadie's father had promised her a five-dollar brooch, but she had forfeited that and bought the pillows and blanket and spread for Jane's bed, and medicine for Mr. Duncriff, and Bob gave his three dollars, that he had saved to buy marbles and trinkets for next year with, to buy Frank a coat; Jennie and Hugh bought Mrs. Duncriff that new shawl and bonnet she wore the last time she was out, and Mr. and Mrs. MacFee bought the suits for Fred, Frank and Mr. Duncriff, and Mrs. Duncriff's new dress, instead of going for their holiday trip to the coast next summer.

After a day well spent, the MacFees returned home with light and thankful hearts, and the deep peace within their uplifted souls proved to them the truth of the words:

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

BERNICE VIDA COUSINS.

Broadview Farm, Pendennis, Man.

Bobby—"Is oxygen what the oxen breathe all day?"

Daddy—"Of course, and everything else breathes."

Bobby—"And is nitrogen what everyone breathes at night?"

Daddy gave it up.

Send in your subscription price to the Farmer's Advocate at once and so secure the whole of our new serial story.

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