

THE NUT-SHELL, MARCH, 1890.

HOME DECORATION.

No one who enters many of the homes of the country can fail to notice what a marked progress has been made in beautifying them. Almost every young woman, and many of the older ones, are now capable of doing a large variety of things that go to make up home-decoration, and those are found in the household in great profusion. A few cents or dollars will go to a surprising length in the purchase of materials for this work of aesthetic art, and these in the deft fingers of wife and daughter become choice attractions in beautifying the home. The decoration of the home is not only an effect of the growing taste and appreciation of the time, but is also a cause of improving them. Whoever lives amid beautiful surroundings partakes of the influence that emanates from them, and his or her life must be moulded considerably by them. They give a tone to life, just as a painting gets tone from its coloring. The mothers and daughters of the land, by means of their home-decoration and beautifying, are giving a new coloring to life that makes it more precious than ever before.

LAUGHTER.

There ought to be societies formed for the encouraging of laughter. A real laugh is not common, for it must be remembered that a snicker is not a laugh. Foreigners travelling in this country have more than once remarked upon the singular gravity of Americans as a race. The Puritans were inclined to frown upon laughter as frivolous, and therefore wicked. Life was a very grave affair to them, and an almost constant struggle for existence, and they had no time to make merriness. The first two centuries of our national life were busy years. Privations were many and the Indians almost constant upon the warpath. It is no wonder our forefathers rarely enjoyed a hearty laugh. Then came the Revolution, which was certainly no laughing matter.

Perhaps all these wars, troubles and privations must have fixed gravity in our national heart. Then it may be that the idea was widely entertained that it was undignified to laugh. We know that the world were upon us, and that it would never do to act like children. Philosophers and cynics sneer at laughter. Goldsmith (who was always laughing) tells us of "the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind," and the scornful Byron says, "And if I laugh at any mortal thing, 'tis that I may not weep."

Many people are afraid to laugh, because they think it is common; so they repress their merriment with a smile.

They do wrong. Nature evidently intended us to laugh, or children would not know how. Laughter is healthful, and provocative of good morals as well as good health.

Hanlet says that "one may smile and smile, and be a villain," and so one might; but no one could laugh and laugh and be a villain.

To sneeze, grin, guffaw or smile is not to laugh. A good, whole-souled, hearty laugh is a panacea for many ills, and worth a doctor's prescription.

OUR SCHOOL-GIRLS.

The average school-girl rises only in time to eat a hurried breakfast, and to reach school at nine, says the *Christian Register*. The girls under twelve, who are not the ones that break down, are not too dignified to romp at recess, and in that way they fill their lungs with fresh air every day. Those about twelve or thirteen rarely have a breath of outside air from nine to two in the afternoon. They eat their luncheons curled up in heaps in comfortable corners, if they can find them. They take a little exercise, except in a few schools, when they dance for a few minutes. A solitary lunch of cold or "warmed over" food on roachery hours has followed usually by an hour or two of study, instead of by a brisk walk or other exercise. There is more study after supper, ambitious girls studying late in the evening. If there is any well-established physiological fact it is that girls in these hours need an abundance of sleep before midnight, if pos-

sible. The teachers must give a certain amount of home work to their pupils in order to keep them up to the grade, more is the pity, but, since that is a necessity, the fathers and mothers at home should make everything else bend to that end health. There is no one who might be so easily secured, if firmness were exercised, as a long night of sleep for the fast-growing brain and girlish frames that are rapidly assuming the proportions of maturity.

A CONSIDERATE MAN

The most considerate people in the United States live in Ozark, Ark. One

ain't busy then I'll tell you what I want. Good mornin'." Janson rode away, and about an hour afterwards he again rode up to the house. "Still busy, Miz Greg?" "Yes, fur I ain't got the yarf done yet, an' I wanted to finish it before the preacher comes." "When do you look for him?" "Most any minit now." "Well, then, I reckon I'll have to wait a while longer, for I don't want to be embarrassed on my account." "How long would it take you to attend to the business you have got on hand, Mr. Sutton?" "Oh, not long, but we can put it off

have had a large and lucrative practice in my profession, but this year the elements are against me. I know that is no snow on the premises, but it is going to rain this afternoon and rain all night. I'll come back and shovel later. Now, if you will give me ten cents advance money, is it a go?" "Yes, indeed," she replied, and she slammed the door in his face. "And they say that genius and tact win every time," he sighed, as he shuffled down the stoop.

AS PER SCHEDULE.

Mr. Nibbs—Oh, Miss Snover! I love you devotedly, truly, lastingly! On my knees I beseech you, will you be mine?

Miss Snover—I have heard your application. Here is "Form No. 1," which I wish you would consider, and file the same with me to-morrow.

Form No. One.

1. Did your mother ever have any luck in making a pie?
2. Was the last young lady who refused you entirely without fault?
3. How many loaves a week do you utter?
4. Do you think that women's rights go any distance beyond marriage rites?
5. After man and woman are made one, which is the one?
6. How long, do you think, does a woman sustain her good looks?
7. What should be the difference between a man waiting for a meal and a meal waiting for a man?
8. What is the relative difference between a wife's relations and a hus band's?
9. Define the point between liberality and stinginess!

10. At what age does short-sightedness strike in your family?

ENGLISH SPEAKING RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OF THE WORLD.

Episcopalians.....	21,450,000
Methodists of all descriptions	16,100,000
Roman Catholics.....	14,550,000
Presbyterians of all descrip'ns	10,700,000
Baptists of all descriptions	8,210,000
Congregationalists.....	5,650,000
Free Thinkers.....	5,500,000
Lutherans, etc.....	1,500,000
Unitarians.....	1,000,000
Minor Religious Sects.....	2,500,000
Of no particular religion	10,000,000

English-speaking population, 63,860,000. A very large number of Hindus and others in the East also speak and read English. The estimates in the above table are from Whittaker's (London) Almanac, 1887.

EMERSON ON "CHARACTER."

Character is nature in its highest form. It is of no use to speculate, or to contend with it. This unscriptured life has been laid on it. Nature never rhymes her children, nor makes two men alike.

None will ever solve the problem of his character according to our prejudice but only in his own unprejudiced way.

We have seen many counterfeits, but we are to be believers in great men.

I know nothing which life has to offer so satisfying as the profound good understanding which can subsist, after much exchange of good offices, between two virtuous men, each of whom is sure of himself and sure of his friend. The people know that they used in their representations much more than talent; namely, the power to make his talents trusted.

How often has a true master realized all the tales of an angel? The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher to a lower vessel.

FRENCH PECOCITY.

We have been shown a private announcement of birth which runs as follows: "If Anyone can be aged eight days, has the honor to inform you of his birth which took place at the beginning of last week. He is quite well, and so is his mother."

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ROY, ONT.

of the politest and most considerate of those people is Janson H. Sutton, a man of limited means financially, but rich in courtesy. One day Janson, a bachelor, by the way, rode up to the fence surrounding the house of Mrs. Greg, and seeing her sweeping the yard, thus addressed her: "Oh, Miz Greg, have you time to come here a minit? I want to see you on a little matter of business." "I am in a pretty big hurry to git this yard done, Mr. Sutton, an' if your business ain't so mighty important, why I'd like for you to put it off awhile." "All right. I'll be back this way in about an hour from now, an' if you

easy enough. I just wanted to ask you to marry me, but I'll wait till you get the time. Good mo'ning, Miz Greg." *Arkansas Traveler.*

WHERE GENIUS DIDN'T WORK.

He was just a plain tramp, undulcerated with soap, and he carried over his shoulder a wooden snow-shovel several sizes too big for him. He pulled the bell in a business-like way, and when she opened the door he said: "Are you a Christian?" "Yes," (in surprise). "And do you believe that honest, earnest endeavor should be rewarded?" "Ye-es," "Heretofore