

Unique Gift to Birds.

Everyone has seen birds and squirrels in the parks fed and coaxed with crumbs, nuts, and all such things, but a certain man who habituates Stuyvesant square, makes a unique gift to his little feathered friends. Nearly every day he passes through with a wad of cotton, and tears it up, scattering it bit by bit while the birds gather round him. Not a single piece is wasted. As the little pieces float through the air, the birds catch them and fly away, apparently delighted at the idea of free building materials.—New York Press.

A Game for Winter Parties.

A good game for a winter evening, says Children's Amusement Book, is "Nuts in a Tumbler." To each of your guests give two tumblers or cups, in one of which are eight or ten nuts, and a pair of knitting needles. The game is to see which can take the nuts out of the one cup (with the needles) and put them into the other first,—the shorter the time allowed the more fun. The needles are not to be prodded into the nuts, but are to be used as tongs.

The Ingle Nook.

[Rules for correspondents in this and other Departments: (1) Kindly write on one side of paper only. (2) Always send name and address with communications. If pen-name is also given, the real name will not be published. (3) When enclosing a letter to be forwarded to anyone, place it in stamped envelope ready to be sent on. (4) Allow one month, in this department, for answers to questions to appear.]

A Letter from Grandmother.

Dear Dame Durden,—Here is a new member craving a small corner in your charming Nook. I have often intended writing, but somehow the weeks and months and years slipped by—yes, years, for I have been a reader of "The Farmer's Advocate" since some of your members were wee tots in short skirts. How long is it since the Ingle Nook in its present form started? And, if I may make so bold to ask, who is your oldest member who still writes? How many of the members looked for a reappearance of "The Shades"? I did for one. Perhaps they met at the big W. I. convention in Toronto. Hasn't the papers been full of it, including the Ingle Nook! Without doubt it was a great gathering of women, but personally I don't take much interest in the Women's Institute. I think it is a great deal of work and worry carrying on an institute for very little, if any profit. I am sure you will agree with me, that farm women have not time to get up papers and such like, and then, after all the work and worry and discussion for those managing an Institute meeting, every single one will go home and do their own old way. I noticed one of the speakers at the convention, mentioned the old-time quilting, and that the Women's Institute had taken its place. I for one don't think so, and I often wish the old-time quilting bee or rag bee back. Everyone could go and have no care or anxiety that they would be put down to do something that was almost impossible, and then after all the worry of trying, only to be criticised and laughed at. For the younger women it may be all right, but I think for older women how much more pleasant to sit down and read such papers as "The Farmer's Advocate," "Home Journal," or a great many more I could name, and I think a great deal more benefit. Now, dear Dame Durden, don't be too severe on me. When everyone is praising up the Institute, it will be like a shower in August to hear something on the other side. I believe a great many women are like the little boy, they "Pay too much for their whistle." How much better and more reliable to write for our information to the Nook, and now, Dear Dame Durden, could you tell me what to do with a dark-gray crepe de chene dress that has got badly spotted? Would it shrink if I dyed it black? Also a few suggestions for a birthday party for about fifteen to a lady's grandchild of seven. The party was in February. Hoping I am not asking too much. GRANDMOTHER. [Toronto, Ont.]

Really I cannot say who is our oldest member. You see contributors seldom state their age. Am sorry you missed "The Shades." Perhaps they are but biding their time,—eh?

So you do not like the Women's Institute? Well, you know, all people are not "built" alike, and I fancy it is well for this old world that they are not. Some like one thing, some another; some have talents of one kind, some of another,—and all goes to make the infinite variety that is, perhaps, necessary. As for the Women's Institute, I am sure that many women find a mental stimulus in getting up papers for it, and also that many have time to spend upon such papers. Those who have not should not try them. I do think, however, that it is a mistake for any society to make the preparation of papers compulsory. Some women are so constituted that they really cannot do anything in that way for public presentation, and I think that the great majority of the Women's Institute branches do not demand it. About criticism? Well, we all need more charity, don't we? And if we do see things to criticise in anything that is said or done in a meeting, perhaps we can learn to keep quiet about it, knowing that each speaker or writer has done her best. Perhaps, too, we can suggest better things without giving offence.

There is one thing that each member should guard against in herself—that is "bossiness"—you know what I mean.

when lighted are sure to delight the children. At each place, too, you might place a small doll made of tissue paper, which each child can keep as a souvenir. I do not think I should have a "birthday pie" (containing the birthday presents) if other children are to be invited in, as the wee tots might, naturally, be a bit covetous. The home presents, you see, could be given when the party is over, and all the little ones have gone home.

You need not be in the least afraid that such little tots will not have a good time. Let them play all they want, keeping them busy at such simple games as blindman's buff, or London bridge, or "hot beans, come to supper," and they will be quite happy. Children love the last. Show them some small object which you are going to hide in an "easy" place, then send them all out of the room. Place the object on a shelf, or on top of a door, or piano—anywhere that it can be plainly seen. Now go to the door and call, "Hot beans, come to supper!" All the children rush in and look about, and each must sit down just as soon as she sees the object. The one who is longest in finding the "beans" is loudly clapped, with great merriment. This game may be played over and over before children grow tired of it.

I wish country teachers could find time to teach children some of the "folk-dances" or "folk-games," which are now taught in nearly all city kindergartens. The children love them, and they are so

of our immigrants come from the northern lands; the Icelanders, though few in number, taking a foremost part in the upbuilding of Winnipeg and other Western cities. These peoples have transformed their long cold nights of winter into a real blessing,—a time of recreation of mind and spirit. All our arts and sciences are but outgrowths of effort to make life easier and pleasanter.

Many valuable scientific discoveries have come in leisure or play. A boy's kite-string was the basis of our telegraph system; an idly dreaming lad was inspired by the jumping teakettle lid to develop the magic power of steam; and it was when "his listless length at noontide did he stretch" that Newton had revealed to him the principle of gravitation, the knowledge of which is the foundation of much mechanical power.

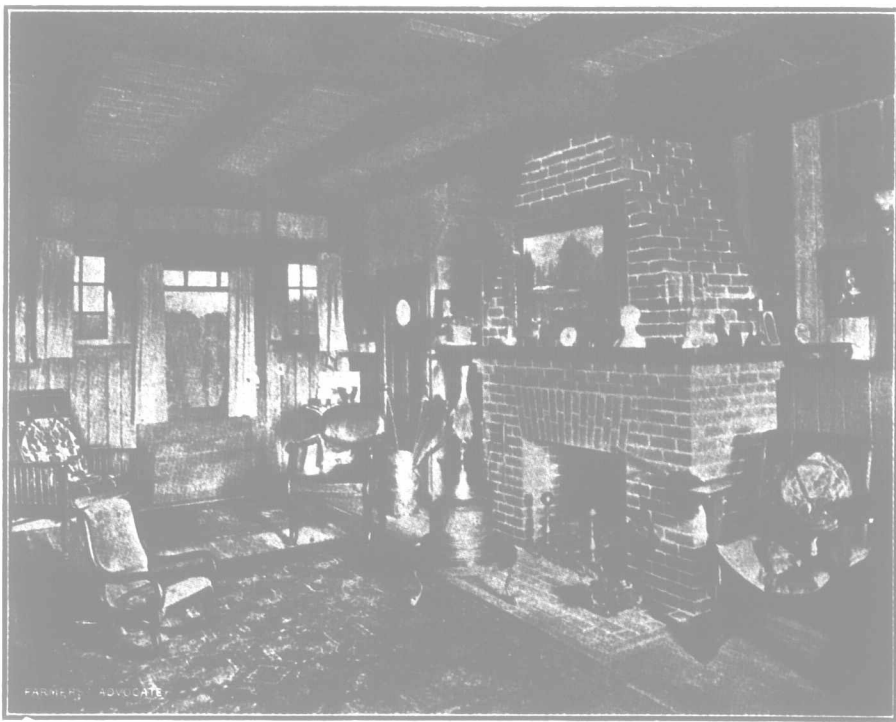
And how closely work and play are intertwined! There is no play so fascinating, nor education so valuable, as that which comes to a child watching and sharing the labor of its parents. A child of five years will, without weariness or complaint, travel miles every day with his father cultivating the fields, obtaining much instruction in natural science, and being care-free will delight in all the beauties of nature. Considering the ant and the bee, he becomes wise, so that when he goes to school he already has much store of knowledge ready for the teacher to help him classify and express. I am convinced that a healthy child of six years or upwards can be made entirely self-supporting on a farm—and that without being an object of pity either. I am sure many are, only they do not receive the credit for it.

At a meeting of the National Council of Women some time ago, much indignation was expressed at the fact that in Ontario many children under 14, or even 12 years, were employed in canning factories—shelling peas, etc.

As they were kept long hours in stifling hot rooms, this was deplorable indeed, but surely it was no worse than to be starving and homeless on the city streets, which sad alternative awaits many of them if they are prevented from working,—and I fail to see wherein they would be better or happier herded in dusty, crowded schoolrooms, in unsafe buildings, where they would be, perhaps, required to write their spelling fifty times, and be compelled to add long columns of figures until they attained the speed of skilled accountants before they would be permitted to read anything more interesting than cat, rat, hat. I once heard of a school teacher whose favorite discipline was to have culprits write "I am a bad boy" (or girl) and sign name, 10, 15 or 20 times. One day two boys broke some rule, and were sentenced to write their names 40 times; one was "Jo Day," the other "Ebenezer Morningstar."

The gratitude of millions of school children should go out to that queer, shabby, and poor old German, Froebel, the founder of the kindergarten. It is true he did not invent it—it has existed ever since a mother played with her child—but Froebel gave the principles expression, and got for them a hearing from men—men who make the laws and run the school boards.

Some generations back it was not uncommon for men to meet and earnestly discuss crops and live stock, leaving the training of their children to the "feebler intellects" of the women. How happy we of this glorious twentieth century, when such is no longer the case! Froebel taught that "there is nothing so important or profitable to the world as the training of the children," and also that "knowledge worth having comes with pleasure," and so ardently were his doctrines expounded that now, in the better schools and homes, we see children learning morals and manners, arts and sciences, through the happy medium of play. A Toronto newspaper reporter wrote up a comical description of the spectacle presented by 30 or 40 middle-aged school ma'ams learning new kindergarten plays, such as "How do you do, my partner? How are you to-day?" Well, we need more of that sort of teaching in all our schools. Many children do not appear to know how to say "Good morning." They don't mean to be rude, but all they know is "Hullo!" Once I was amused, yet saddened, watching a little girl—a nice,



A Handsome Brick Fireplace.

Each meeting of any society whatever should be friendly, warm, "human,"—everyone willing to give someone else a chance, everyone able at all to contribute to the general enjoyment or instruction willing, in some way, to contribute.

I wish you could come down to the big convention in Toronto next time. I am sure you would enjoy it.

By the way, why need the W. I. do away with the old quilting-bee or rag-bee? Anyone who wishes has still a chance to make one.

No, Grandmother, I do not feel like being "hard on you" at all. I fully realize that if you feel it too much to give papers, you should not be expected to give them; nor, indeed, to go to the meetings at all if you do not enjoy them.

About your dress: Crepe de chine is a material that dyes very well if it is well shrunk before it is made up. Personally, I am a little sceptical about home-dyeing, so I send all of my own things that must be re-colored to a good dyeing company. I am well aware, however, that many people are experts at home dyeing. If you attempt it, be sure to get a dye suited to the material. If it is all-wool crepe de chine, get "wool" dye. You know dyes are made especially now for cotton, wool, silk and wool and cotton mixtures, etc.

For your little grandchild's birthday party, be sure to have a birthday cake, iced and decorated prettily, with tiny candles fixed all round it, one for each year of her age. These candles may be bought all ready, white, pink or red, and

good for developing gracefulness, and for exercising all parts of the body.

Quilt Patterns—Spice Cake.

"Cook," Que., also sent a basket pattern, which arrived rather late. We shall be pleased to receive some of the other patterns she mentioned. She also contributes a recipe for spice cake, which she finds excellent: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk (sour), $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda, 2 cups flour, 1 teaspoonful cassia, cloves, allspice.

Games and Home Amusements for Children.

[From a paper read last fall by Mrs. W. G. McBean, at a meeting of the Women's Institute, West Lambton.]

Winter has come, "with wailing winds," and lest the little ones in our care should too much "feel the sad influence of the hour," it becomes us to devise ways of amusement for the long winter. By a wise use of leisure, even more than by diligence in daily toil, are people advanced and exalted. Who that has read the beautiful poem, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," can doubt that to the evening leisure hour and the Sabbath day of rest Scotland owes her literary greatness. Sometimes it seems as if the Westerner's jest was sober truth when he said, "Canada will build the universities and Scotland will send the professors." The immigration officials of Western Canada assert that the very best