

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

LETTERS TO COUSIN CARYL.

Dear Cousin Caryl,—You know Cordelia Herbert is always doing something "pro bono publico," as dear Uncle Haynes always used to say. What do you think is her latest idea? I think it a very good one. She has started a "Working Girls' Mending Bureau," and put it in charge of a young widow left with two babies to support and nothing to do it with. Cordelia found her a room and paid her first month's rent, and she will probably be able to pay hereafter herself. It is a splendid idea. The working girl who does her work well, who earns her money honestly, is always willing to pay for what she gets, but who, because of the hours that must be devoted to daily toil, very often pays more than she needs because there is so much she cannot do herself.

In the evening the eyes that have been strained all day are too tired to watch a needle as it goes in and out a darn, or freshen and steam the trimming that is to go upon a hat! The consequence is that the mending is left forever undone and a milliner is paid for a new hat. Any girl would be willing to pay a proper price to have the gown which is torn, the stockings that are worn, the gloves that are ripped, and the hat that is getting dusty and worn, made to look as good as new, but who shall do it? Unfortunately, no mother is at hand to look after this, and dependence must be placed upon a stranger, and I think Cordelia's little widow is just the sort of person needed. Such a bureau ought to be started in every city of any size.

A French cook, whose achievement in cooking vegetables is something noteworthy, says the secret of all his excellence lies in two things that are not commonly known to American cooks. The first is in cooking things long enough. Americans, he says, cook their vegetables just about half long enough. Where a cook usually devotes two hours to the preparation of a dinner he gives four, and where they boil things half hours he boils them whole hours and more. The second secret after the hearty boiling is in the use of meat stock to flavor vegetables. This is added to the vegetables while they are still boiling, and long enough before they are done to let the flavor of the stock be thoroughly absorbed by the vegetables. And there are no vegetables, he finds, that are not more gratifying to the palate as well as nourishing to the body for the addition of a little strong, clear stock while cooking. This is certainly worth knowing, and I have tried and proved it, as I usually try recipes before recommending them to others. Do you know, it is said that coffee grounds make a good filling for a pin cushion, the grounds to be perfectly dry before using, and it is said the needles and pins will never rust? Coffee grounds make an excellent mulch and fertilizer combined for rose bushes. I keep a pail handy and pour all the tea and coffee grounds into it, with what tea and coffee happen to be left to throw out. Then when I get ready to work in the garden I take the pail along and pour its contents round the rose bushes. They thrive on this diet.

And so you think "the Anglo-Maniacs" the brightest century story since "the Bread-Winners." Well, it has taken wonderfully here. Everybody is guessing who can have written it. Some—a great many—lay it to the author of "Margaret Kent and Queen Money," but to me it does not read like Ellen Olney Kirk. A guess has been made and is gaining ground that the story was written by Mrs. Mary E. Bryan, a little Georgia woman who came to New York and makes a very bright journalist. I believe she receives something like \$10,000 a year from the International News Co. as editor of their publications. I rather incline to think of the "Anglo-Maniacs" as hers. Among the many things said of Miss Leiter, the Chicago heiress, who is reported engaged to the son of an English duke, the latest is that she is the heroine of the "Anglo-Maniacs," and that the reason that with all her beauty and fortune she has gone through several seasons and is not yet married, is because her heart is for some "Jencks" of the West, while her mamma determined to make a titled match for her. Those who are ready to declare American girls eager to snap up titles at any personal cost may be interested in a new way in the probable fact that this Chicago girl has kept a duke's son on probation since last her mother took her to England a year ago.

Poor Lily! After all, is it worth while to be beautiful? And yet none of us would have our daughters one whit less pretty. It is a pretty and sensible recipe to help a young girl to be beautiful which is given by a writer about girls, who says, "admire them, love them and tell them so, and it will improve their looks." It is just possible that mothers, aunts and guardians, teachers, chums and big sisters make a serious mistake in withholding admiration from the growing girls entrusted to their care. The sympathy and encouragement, the love-pats and hand-clasps, the light caresses and the warm sheltering pair of arms into which a girl may creep are not listed on the programme of exercises in the school or home, but they can no more be dispensed with than air and sunlight. Sweet words are the music of the world. Tell your daughter her hair is silky, tell her you like the touch of it against your face, lament your inability to arrange the front prettier, and you have solved the hair question for life. Just so sure as she can lay her hands on a comb and brush she will care for and dress her hair, and your face will come before her every time she looks in the glass.

Then instead of having to tell her to "keep a sweet expression of countenance if she wishes to drive away wrinkles," such an expression will become habitual and unconscious with her—which is much the better way.

Yours,
Boston. ELEANOR WYNNE.

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