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A LITTLE HOUSEWIFE.

[From photo: Franz Hanfstaeigl, Munich.

"THE SCARLET THREAD."

By E. C. SALTMER.

"How dull is life!" a maiden cried;
 And o'er this sad refrain she sighed,
 "So little pleasure, so much pain,
 So full of toil, so little gain!
 'Tis like a loom whereon each thread,
 As woven in, looks dark and dead.
 I throw my shuttle day by day,
 But still they come out cold and grey;
 Nor warp nor woof will ever shine
 With colours in this loom of mine.
 I look around, but all I see
 Of other lives perplexes me;
 On every hand their fabrics fair
 With mine so poor I must compare.
 I see their textures rich with gold,
 And shot with colours manifold;
 With best designs of art replete,
 In what seems perfect all complete;
 And yet, if closely you espy,
 A tiny flaw may meet the eye;

A flaw unnoticed, till there springs
 A rent therefrom that ruin brings.
 Ah! what is lacking, weaver, say,
 Who doth the threads supply each day?
 Why some so seeming fair and bright,
 And others sombre as the night?"
 Oh, maiden, there is still one thread
 Your shuttle lacks, its colour—red,
 Or rather, scarlet is the line
 That you should straightway intertwine
 To make your fabric strong and sure;
 For then no rent will come from flaw;
 And howsoever grey it seem,
 This thread the dulness will redeem.
 No golden glint nor hues that daze
 Can e'er a texture's value raise.
 It can be only seeming fair,
 Unless the scarlet thread is there.
 It means Redemption, nothing less;
 So weave in fast His Righteousness.

IN SPIITE OF ALL.

By IDA LEMON, Author of "The Charming Cora," "A Winter Garment," etc.

CHAPTER II.



BEATTIE'S Aunt Ella was a French-woman, and younger than her husband by several years. She was short and stout and not at all pretty, but she was very vivacious and had a bright gay manner that

carried people away with her. She was also very well off and could call to her aid all that was necessary in the way of art to improve on the shortcomings of nature. For, like many people who think much of personal beauty and do not possess it, she had a great deal of vanity. She had exquisite feet and hands, and to the right exhibition and proper adornment of these she devoted hours of meditation, while as much thought was given on how to hide or diminish her defects, such as her over-stoutness and red complexion. For the former she was for ever trying some new cure, in the way of diet or other treatment. At one time her food had to be weighed by herself at the dinner-table, at another claret had to be drunk at a certain specified time after instead of with meals, while, in the matter of exercise at stated intervals, she was a perfect tyrant to herself. Still, everyone must have some interest, and her husband, who took life philosophically, and who owed to his wife the fact that he was independent of his business for a substantial income, was thankful that her interest ended with herself instead

of causing her to meddle with other people's affairs. He had a theory that, if a woman can gratify her selfishness she has a right to it.

Then, too, Aunt Ella had behaved very well about Beattie. When Mr. Swannington's sister died and left the child to his charge, his wife made no objection to having her. At first Beattie was a new toy to the childless woman, then a genuine pleasure. She interfered little with her comfort; she was exceedingly affectionate and had good health. Also Aunt Ella took a pride in her beauty. She enjoyed buying her pretty dresses and picture hats and seeing her wear them. She found solid comfort in this, for the love of clothes was a passion with her, and yet she had enough good taste and good sense to see that it was more becoming to her to wear quiet colours and simple designs than the more elaborate styles she craved for. As Beattie grew up this satisfaction became keener. When she was buying a bonnet, expensive but simple, she would see a hat with broad brim and feathers and loops of bright-coloured ribbon, and turn it round and round on her hand, longing to put it on, but not daring to because she knew the shop-woman would be amused however grave she might look. Then she would have her momentary triumph.

"You may send this home with the bonnet," she would say.

And when it came home she would try it on with locked doors, and afterwards give it to Peattie with a sigh, following her with her eyes for the first few times she wore it with an expression of mingled delight and envy.

In Beattie's education she took little interest. She sent her to a good day-school and considered she had done her duty. She had never cared for study herself, and she hated learned women.

"Why should she spoil her eyes and her complexion by poring over books?" she would say to her husband. "They will be worth far more to her than a mind by-and-by."

A wiser man might have told her that an empty mind is a greater destroyer of beauty than an over-filled one, but in these matters Mr. Swannington was willing to be guided by his wife.

"She shall learn to dance well, behave prettily, dress well, and sing. With that, Lionel, she will be well-equipped, and we will marry her very soon, you will see."

And to be soon married, to some one of means, meant to Mrs. Swannington the acme of woman's success. When once she had seen Beattie mistress of her own house, and that a good one, she would feel she had done her duty to the sister-in-law she had never seen; for Beattie's parents had lived in India.

So that to her Beattie's leaving school was a matter on which she saw fit to congratulate rather than condole with her niece.

"How *gauche* she is, that Margaret," she said. "She is quite without charm. But pretty mothers often have such daughters. S. now school is over, eh, Beattie?"

"I have a prize, Aunt Ella," said Beattie, turning as she went upstairs to prepare for luncheon. Aunt Ella was following her, panting a good deal, as was her wont.

"Oh—but I thought—that—plain-girl!" (stopping for breath between each word), "that Edith was to have them all."

"She did have three, and she was not lower than third in anything. She is clever."

"She need be," said Aunt Ella, who was now safe on level ground. "She squints."

"Oh, no, Aunt Ella," Beattie said indignantly. "You are thinking of Rosie Sinclair."

"But—yes." Aunt Ella turned into her bed-room. "Well, I am glad you beat her in something."

Mrs. Swannington's remarks were quite without malice. She found it more interesting to pick faults in people than to praise them, but she meant no unkindness, and her deeds were so far better than her words, that, if she did not make a practice of doing good, at any rate she never voluntarily injured anybody, and, where she liked, she was generous to a degree, as her husband had good cause to know.

Mr. Swannington did not come home to luncheon. Generally Beattie had her early dinner at the school, where it could be obtained by girls who lived at a distance or whose parents did not care for them to come backwards and forwards twice. So that to Mrs. Swannington luncheon was a solitary meal and would have been a dull one, but for the fact that every morsel she ate and every sip she drank had a special bearing on her course of banting, which could be more deliberately undertaken now than when the appetites of others had to be considered, or demands in the way of conversation made upon her. Besides which she liked eating only less than dress, and at other meals she was constantly put in the way of temptation by some succulent but fat-forming dish. No one could measure her struggles in the matter of whipped cream, nor all it meant to her to pass it by. But at luncheon she positively forbade its appearance.

Beattie's presence to-day made little difference to her. For once the girl was not talkative. She was still feeling a little low-spirited at her parting from the other girls. So Aunt Ella ate her chicken and dry biscuits silently and deliberately. Presently she said—

"I do not drive again to-day, Beattie. I rest an hour and then I take my walk. I may perhaps call on Mrs. Gilman. You can come with me if you like; and then we will go on to Kensington and get you a walking costume. At Crabtree one dresses."

Beattie hated shopping, especially with Aunt Ella, who was very long in making a choice, and, as it seemed to the impatient girl, over-particular in matching; but she liked Mrs. Gilman and was glad to go and see her.

At four the two set forth. Aunt Ella proceeded very slowly, with short uneven steps, and it was a good thing for Beattie that her walk of the morning had taken away some of her usual energy, as otherwise she would have scarcely had patience at their scant progress. They had not very far to go. Aunt Ella, who measured her exercise as she weighed her food, knew exactly the distance. Mrs. Gilman was at home, but she was not in the drawing-room when her visitors were shown in.

Aunt Ella took out her pince-nez and looked about the room. She never allowed herself to be bored.

"There is nothing new," she said aloud. "How tired one gets of these

everlasting photographs. And Mrs. Gilman's friends are all so plain. Ah, there is a fresh likeness of Evelyn. That child will not be pretty. She has her father's nose. Yes, there is a new photograph. Well, that is a face I admire. Who is he, I wonder?" She seated herself in her usual attitude, one daintily-shod foot thrust a little forward, her hands on her lap, for she heard Mrs. Gilman approaching.

The door opened and a lady of about Aunt Ella's age entered the room. She was tall and slender and rather pretty. She seemed genuinely pleased to see Mrs. Swannington, and kissed Beattie warmly.

"Eva will be so glad you have come," she said. "I have just been out with her."

"You have had her photographed again, I see," said Mrs. Swannington. "It is very charming. She grows more like her father."

"Do you think so?" said Mrs. Gilman, looking pleased, and she fetched the photograph and handed it to her friend, who remarked—

"It is quite a little picture. For children I always find a lady-photographer more successful than a man. She has more sympathy. If I had children I would learn photography that I might myself take them. The best attitudes and expressions are not to be seen in the photographer's studio, but at home. Presently, you will see every mother will be her children's photographer."

"And every wife her husband's?" Mrs. Gilman asked laughing.

Mrs. Swannington raised both hands. The expressive French mannerism was natural to her and favoured the display of her charms.

"But—no!" she said, with a little scream of horror. "The world is too full of ugly men. But tell me, who is that in the carved frame? It is a face that interests me."

"That? Oh, he is a friend of Robin's, a barrister. He is extremely clever, and Robin thinks he will be a great man one day. He is only a little over thirty now, though he seems older. I think him very handsome."

"Without doubt," said Aunt Ella.

"I will ask you to meet him when next he dines here," said Mrs. Gilman. "And that reminds me. I want you to let Beattie spend the evening here next Tuesday. I have two or three people coming, all young, and I should so like to have Beattie. I am expecting a cousin to stay with me. She is coming to town for a day or two, and then we all go to Devonshire together."

"Beattie goes nowhere yet," said Aunt Ella. "It is but to-day her school broke up, and she will not come out till next season."

"But this is all so informal, dear Mrs. Swannington. And Norah and she would get on so well I am sure. Norah is very little older. How old are you, Beattie?"

"I am just seventeen," said Beattie.

"Do let me come, Aunt Ella."

"As you will. It is very kind of you, dear Mrs. Gilman. But are we not to

see little Eva? Beattie will be disappointed."

Mrs. Swannington did not care for children. But she never failed to show interest in them to their mothers. The bell was rung, and presently a little girl of about six appeared. When she saw Beattie she ran to her with a cry of pleasure for she was very fond of her, but she could hardly be persuaded to speak to the older lady. Tea being brought in, however, the attention of the latter was turned elsewhere.

"Very weak, and no milk. I dare not. And only one lump of sugar. Ah, my dear Mrs. Gilman, how I envy you that you are thin."

The two ladies now entered upon an interesting subject, for both were concerned in it. Mrs. Gilman was only one degree less anxious to be stouter than Mrs. Swannington to be thin. And Beattie and Eva were left to entertain each other. Eva was a dear little child, really pretty and very natural and bright. She told Beattie all about her new toys, for she had just had a birthday, and presently took her away to the nursery to show her some kittens.

"Beattie is a wonderfully sweet girl," said Mrs. Gilman. "She does great credit to your bringing up."

Mrs. Swannington shrugged her shoulders.

"I do not take much credit. She has a nice disposition, and I have left it alone. You will perhaps be shocked at me, but I have not patience with all the new notions on the training of girls. Was I trained? No. My dear mother was an admirable woman and she understood the world. She chose me a husband who was good-looking and amiable. *Ehfn*. I am happy. I shall do the same for Beattie."

"But Beattie may have her own ideas," Mrs. Gilman ventured to suggest.

"Not at all. If I had made of her a clever woman, or let her go on studying, and so on till she was three years older, she might. Then she would have got ideals and such nonsense. Now she has none. As yet she prefers the society of schoolgirls to that of men. She is unconscious of her beauty. She has no romantic notions. I know what is for her happiness, and I shall act for her. She will marry whom I choose, and, believe me, after twelve years of marriage and of observation of other women's husbands, I can safely decide for Beattie."

Mrs. Gilman did not feel the matter was as simple as her visitor seemed to think. But she was sensible enough to refrain from expressing an opinion. She was not so worldly-wise as Mrs. Swannington, but neither was she so shallow. She could see that Beattie would not necessarily be satisfied with what would satisfy her aunt. Mr. Gilman always said that Mrs. Swannington had no soul. At any rate her cravings were entirely for such things as this world could satisfy. She asked little of her friends. If they were ill or dull she avoided them. If they took offence she found others. If they complained of her she was indifferent. Yet many people

were very fond of her. Her husband, although he had not been in love when he married her, grew more attached to her every year, and Beattie, who was not given to analysing people or to weighing their virtues and failings in the balance, looked upon Aunt Ella almost as if she had been her mother, and gave her the affection she could not bestow upon the parent she could scarcely remember.

There were times when the girl realised that the relationship they bore to one another was not exactly that of mother and daughter, and these times were generally when she saw Edith or Margaret in their homes; but she knew that even mothers and daughters are not always in sympathy, and Aunt Ella was never unkind and not often even irritable. Moreover, up to the present Beattie had never had to rely on her for companionship or society; and she herself was undeveloped. Aunt Ella's childishness was not uncongenial to the child.

Up in the nursery Beattie played quite happily with little Eva, quite unaware that her future was the subject of discussion to the ladies in the drawing-room. She was summoned before very long to join them.

"Then I shall see you on Tuesday, Beattie," said Mrs. Gilman. "Come about eight, dear. I am so glad Mrs.

Swannington will spare you to us. I will take great care of her," she said laughing to her aunt. And neither lady had any idea that this casual visit would in any way affect Mrs. Swannington's plans, or Beattie's life.

"Mrs. Gilman," said Aunt Ella, as they walked away from the house, "would be nowhere in society if it were not for her husband. They know nice people and she makes a photographic exhibition of them in her drawing-room that others may see it. But it is Mr. Gilman who attracts them. I noticed her to-day. She is painfully thin; her manners are not distinguished and her colouring is insipid. Your ordinary respectable Englishwoman how she is a bore. Come now, we must hurry, or your uncle will be home before we are back."

Mrs. Swannington always made a point of being at home when her husband returned. She was there to welcome him, uniformly amiable, and full of the gossip of the day or little items of personal interest which would beguile him for the short interval till the dressing-bell rang. She was certainly a model for many cleverer and more attractive women in the way in which she studied her husband in little things. It is true she had abundant leisure and no other claims on her time, but still she did arrange her life by his, and if she spoilt

him at any rate she was not the loser. She made herself necessary to him, kept her best side for him, and made his home-coming cheerful.

The shopping was accomplished somewhat quicker than usual with the desire to get back in Mrs. Swannington's mind, and Beattie found herself the possessor of a very pretty tailor-made costume. She was what is called "stock size" and could wear ready-made garments with very little alteration, an impossibility with Mrs. Swannington, whose figure, as the young ladies in the shops always assured her consolingly was so very uncommon. Some chifton was also purchased to freshen up one of Beattie's simple evening dresses for Tuesday evening.

"Generally," said Mrs. Swannington by way of comment, "girls of your age look so dowdy on an evening. One realises that no new evening-dresses are bought because they are on the verge of coming out, and so they are put into limp and faded garments which they have out-grown. But you may be thankful, Beattie, to have about you someone who never allows you to look at a disadvantage. I am determined, my child, that whatever faults people find with you in the future, no one shall accuse you of being dressed without taste. It would truly break my heart."

(To be continued.)

"THE KING'S DAUGHTERS": THEIR CULTURE AND CARE.

By LINA ORMAN COOPER, Author of "We Wives," etc.

PART V.

HOME INFLUENCE.

"Instruction is given in the school. Education takes place in the home. The masters are the mothers."



It seems strange for the Christian writer, of a Christian paper, treating of a Christian home, to begin the article by a quotation from an Agnostic source. But Renan has hit the nail so straight on the head that I venture to cull the thought. "Home influence" is the one that moulds life for time and eternity. We read a great deal about "heredity" these days.

Perhaps if we gave more thought to environment it might be better.

In order that flowers of faith, and hope, and obedience, may flourish we should surround our children with the fruitful atmosphere of love, trust and approbation. The sunshine of affection should permeate every chamber of the hearts entrusted to our guidance. Our muggy, foggy climate is answerable for much of the discontent and peevishness seen in the school-room. If this is true—and Mrs. Fry has left it on record—how much more depressing must be a morally foggy one! As a shining light

should be the path of the King's daughters. The light of reason should be shown them. The light of truth used as a lantern for their feet. "Home influence"—what a vast vista it opens to our view! And what a number of different things it involves. Myrrh, aloes and cassia, as well as wrought gold! Not only an anointing with the oil of gladness, but with a holy unguent made from thorny, ragged-looking myrrh bushes, red, sweet-smelling cedar, and rough outer cinnamon bark.

Our hands, dear fellow-guardians, need to be wise and skilful in order that the garments of the King's daughters may possess the perfume distilled from the bitter drugs. "In the inner part of the palace"—(true rendering of Psalms xlv. 9) our daughters are secluded in their youth for us to weave their garments with unwrought gold (Rev. Ver.), and to adorn their vesture with needlework. The laws of the nursery and fireside are omnipotent. "Fatal for weal or woe the atmosphere of the home."

If my remarks upon the subject seem disjointed, it is because there is so much to be said, and so short the space to say it in. Just as the thoughts strike me so I jot them down.

First of all religion should not only be made a Sabbath garment, it should be the work-a-day attire in our homes all the year round. Daily family prayer should be as seldom missed as daily family food. A habit of spending a few minutes alone with God should also be established. "Grace" may be asked by any child in turn and thanks returned. Reverence in these matters is most necessary too. Do not mix up the Bible with *débris* of breakfast and supper. Let it stand

on a lectern of its own and bid the reader stand to read therefrom. Wherever possible conduct a little solemn service. These gatherings, carefully and reverently planned as part of the day's programme, will never be forgotten. Like the blue overshadowing wings of the ibis on the mud banks of the Nile they will carry an ever recurring witness to the presence of God in the home. When our girls go into other homes there will be no slurring of the great functions of prayer and praise. Golden bells and sweet pomegranates will be laid heard and seen in their new abiding places.

On Sundays, going to church should be the happiest part of the happiest day in the week. No criticism should be permitted, only a general feeling that all are glad when we say, Let us go unto the house of the Lord. Home education should be directed to this end. To convince our children that they are capable of good and incapable of evil. In time, with the strong recurring power of habit, this will render them actually so. It is often enough to tell young people, that we assume 'his or that good quality in them, to induce them to exert themselves to justify that opinion. This is as true as its reverse, "Give a dog a bad name," etc.

A French writer on heredity and environment has said: "The art of managing the young consists, before anything else, in assuming them to be as good as they wish to be." (This is "suggestion" in its primary sense.) Pascal writes, "Py dint of frequently asserting that a man is a fool we make him so." To assert a child is wicked, or indifferent, is not the way to make her affectionate or good. Encouragement is so necessary. The

happy child is beautiful, loving, lovable, spontaneous, open and sincere. Of a truly great mother it is recorded by her daughter, "She never expected us to be bad children. She always expected us to do well, and after her long and beautiful life, when she was sitting in sunshine, calm and sweet at eighty-seven years of age, she said to one when asked what she would have done differently as a mother if she had to live her life over again: 'I should blame less and praise more.'" If these words "Blame less, praise more" were illumined on the ivory walls of the palaces in which the King's daughters are reared, how good it would be!

Under them another couplet might run--

"Two men looked out from their prison bars,
One saw the mud. The other the stars."

Well for the mother who always sees the stars! The kingdom of heaven is brought very near her girls. One successful guardian told me years ago, when I was starting the small nursery full of children God gave me, "Don't them as little as you can."

In the question of housework each teacher must decide for herself. Personally, I think those girls who show no aptitude for it might be excused. We wish our girls to come to their best. Physically, mentally and morally. Housework is surely subordinate to that intention sometimes? But homely duties may be made most interesting to our little girls. Take the ten-year-old girlie into the dairy with you. Let her learn at what temperature cream will "come" to butter. Show her why the handle of a churn is best turned slowly and regularly. Point out the broken air bubbles to her. Let her wash the crumbs of "oleaginous compound," salt them, and make them up into the pats so dear to the little heart.

"Common tasks require all the force of a trained intellect to bear upon them," and we must try to train in every way until we find the real bent of our children's mind. From the dairy promote to kitchen and store room. Let the tiny, busy, eager hands make a pastry "bill" or loaf of yeast bread. Tell her why turnips are peeled thickly and potatoes thinly. Explain the *raison d'être* of frying, roasting and boiling. Let raisins speak of sunny vineyards in Italy, rice of Indian paddy fields, lentils of mud banks in ancient Egypt, spices of Eastern lands. Let it all be a part of education, not a something grudgingly taken from play hours. Explain the science of cleansing clothes with a due proportion of soda and soap and alkalis. Then let her keep Alexandrina Ann in clean garments. Put a needle in her hand and tell her of the nine others through which it has to pass before it is ready for her use. Let her make something small and useful for daddy or brothers. Do not weary her with seam and gusset and band. Join in "broom drill" with her or let nurse do so, making a frolic of turning mattresses and hunting the peripatetic spider. Mount her on a chair and bid her examine the beautiful web in which "Mr. Fly" is entangled. Then let her try to make something "just as good." She is sure to be ready to do so. Compare her clumsy "ropes" to the gossamer filaments of the weaver and she will lose all fear of such creepy crawleys. Teach her tenderness toward every little flower and chirping bird by the same means, leading her thoughts from the creation to the grand, wonderful, beautiful scheme of the Creator.

But now we come to a more difficult point in home influence—moral training. In one of the too little used collects in our church service we pray that "we may constantly speak the truth and boldly rebuke vice." Yet how difficult it is to be John Baptist in our own homes. We love our little ones so dearly that we are apt to be blind to their faults. But sulkiness, ill-temper, greed, covetousness, deceit, still hold sway in our households.

The seeds are there, what must we do? Have you ever stood amongst the Cotswold Hills and held the source of the Thames in your palm? All around is spread a beautiful panorama of heather and bed-straw, bog-cotton, ragweed and golden moss. Cloud pictures chase each other over "the terrible crystal" which is "as sapphires in their clearness" above our heads. Rich red brown amber peat lies at our feet, and out of it springs this tiny stream. We can hold the Thames in the hollow of our hands up in the Cotswold Hills! How powerless we are to stem its stream at Westminster or Rotherhithe! So, in the early years of our training of the King's daughters, we must curb and restrain. With their faults it is as with the river. We can do much at their source, but the spring will swell into a flood. The sapling will grow into a tree. The infant will become a giant. In common fairness to our girls, we must help them to overcome. "A little child is a figure full of pathos. Without volition of its own it finds itself in a most difficult scene. It looks around on every side for 'help,' and we who are grown wiser should make it at all times tenderly welcome."

Just as in physical diseases I only laid down broad rules for our guidance, so now I would do the same in moral sicknesses. When a child has been naughty, we must not, in blaming it, interpret her action in its worst sense. She is, in general, too unconscious to have had a completely perverse intention. If we impress on our little girl a too intense sense of sin, it may lead to moral paralysis and our efforts would be completely frustrated. Appeal to the divine in them. Believe in the divine in them. Cultivate the divine in them. This is the theory of true culture and care. "Our Father which art in heaven" disposes of any other belief.

And it is a wonderful lever in home-life. I would not dare to face the future for my own flock unless I were convinced that they are King's daughters, children of God and heirs of eternal life.

Still even King's daughters may have blemishes. Sulkiness is one of the most disfiguring, worse than small-pox marks, or erysipelas or eczema. The lowering brow, black looks and ugliness of a child in the sulks is appalling. If we wish the King's daughters to be beautiful, with the comeliness He puts upon them, we shall watch for this first manifestation of unsociability and combat it with all our might. "By letting a child acquire the habit of sulkiness we let her acquire the habit of abiding by the fault she has committed without making any effort at reparation."

A sulky child is her own enemy. If we let the unpleasantness grow with her growth, she will develop into a sullen woman. The two adjectives are not quite synonymous. The latter is a far worse disease. A fit and a mood are different. The old version of Psalms xc. 17 says, "Let the pleasantness of the Lord our God be upon us." It is that very pleasantness we want to help on our girlie's faces. In this, the best service we can do our children is to maintain the sweet look of calmness ourselves.

"Allure to brighter worlds and lead the way."

If St. Vitus's dance be infectious—and so it is proved to be—how much more "catching" is example in home life?

Truth-telling is one of the brightest jewels we can weave into the borders of the garments of the King's daughters. In God's word, speaking the truth and acting sincerely are almost interchangeable words. Comp. marg. Ephes. iv. 15 with revised version of the same.

In our attitude towards "story-telling" we need to have our eyes anointed with the salve

of wisdom. We must remember that fiction is natural to children. It has been said, with some truth, that a lie is the first exercise of imagination—the first invention, the germ of art. This has some truth in it, as I said before, and it will make us lenient in our view of a "romance." But we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that there is a moral lie. In other words, a dissimulation which chiefly arises from fear. Children are not morally untruthful unless driven to be so from fear. Deceit is in direct ratio to ill-judged severity and unscientific education. Far from being inclined naturally to hide an act of disobedience or boldness, children are rather led to tell it as a mark of personal independence. Encourage the little girls to tell you everything, dear fellow-guardians. Allow for the "make-believe" which dignifies mud and water into "pies" and sees a wonderful past and future for Alexandrina Ann. But, by all means check vicious untruth at once. Let confession never mean punishment. Let penitence always bring forgiveness. The child needing severity is the child who lacks affection. L lavish on the King's daughters enough love, and threats and blows will be unnecessary. Love begets love. It is the most powerful weapon in all education, especially in home life.

In my papers on Queen Baby I spoke of obedience. Our girls should have learned that lesson whilst still autocrats of the nursery. The King's daughters will not need to begin again at A B C.

But the secret of all home influence is—

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE.

Nothing succeeds like love. Begin with it, go on with it, you will never finish it.

Take your sweet, obedient, truthful, good-tempered little girls in your arms and love them much for being good.

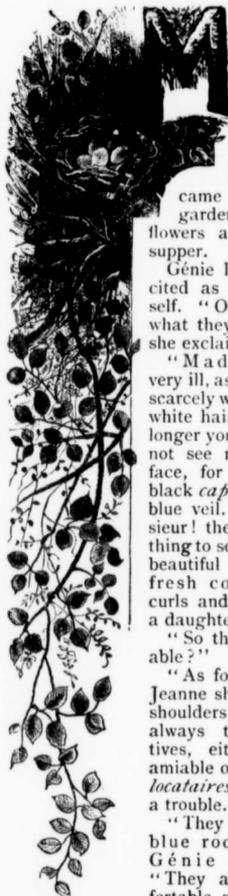
Take your unruly, sulky, deceitful little girls into your arms and love them into being good.

Before concluding this article I should like to say something about the altruism of parents in respect to the training of the King's daughters. We must not forget that in the sight of God we are as best account as our little girls are. "The best service a mother can do to her children is to maintain the standard of her own life at its highest." We need to read, and travel, and learn, and recreate, in order that we may help our children to do the same. There is something wrong in the home influence which disposes a girl to think she is the pivot of the household. Mother's room is generally the receptacle for delicate furniture, broken-legged chairs, old-fashioned curtains. This is not as it should be. Our girls need to be taught unselfishness, and should begin by thinking their concerns, their rooms, their food, quite of secondary importance. It is really wiser to claim a primary consideration from our bairns, than to take a second seat in the family coach. It is better for our daughters in the long run. It is so good to give them the habit of unselfish regard for their elders. Whether we choose it or not, it is habit which will govern ninety-nine one hundredths of a child's life. How necessary then to form the habit of "in honour preferring" those around. But this paper is exceeding the limits set for it. In the task which is set for parents in the matter of home education, only the words of the Wise One are applicable. "Let the woman beware. All that I commanded her let her observe." We must get ourselves permeated with the wholesome doctrines and instructions of God's Holy Word. Then we must do them. Not only then shall we be praised in the gates of society, but in the more veiled and sacred precincts of the home, and our children will arise and call us blessed.

DOCTOR ANDRÉ.

BY LADY MARGARET MAJENDIE.

CHAPTER IV.



A DEMOISELLE! mademoiselle! they have arrived!" exclaimed Jeanne in a stage whisper as Génie came in from the garden laden with flowers and fruit for supper.

Génie looked as excited as Jeanne herself. "Oh, do tell me what they are like!" she exclaimed.

"Madame looks very ill, as if she could scarcely walk; she has white hair. She is no longer young. I could not see much of her face, for she wore a black *capuchon* and a blue veil. But monsieur! there is something to see! He is a beautiful gentleman; fresh colour, black curls and attentive as a daughter."

"So they look amiable?"

"As for that," said Jeanne shrugging her shoulders, "there are always two alternatives, either one is amiable or one is not; *locataires* are always a trouble."

"They must like the blue rooms," said Génie hopefully. "They are so comfortable and we have made them very pretty."

"Mademoiselle! mademoiselle!" cried Maturin bustling in. "They are asking for coffee. Will you tell Jeanne?"

"That is my affair," said Génie proudly, and she went rapidly into the kitchen.

The next morning Génie was in the meadow caressing Bichette and her baby. The girl in her white cotton gown and sun-bonnet pushed back from her lovely yellow hair, made a charming picture as she stood offering bread and sugar to the tall brown donkey, the little foal nibbling the corner of her apron mischievously.

Monsieur Canière strolled out into the field, dressed in a loose holland suit and a wide Panama hat. He was a short man with a fierce black moustache and imperial, on each side of which his fresh cheeks stood out like a full moon; his expression was intelligent and very kindly.

He took off his hat with a flourish and observed, "These interesting creatures, mademoiselle, are the great charm of country life."

"I love them," said Génie, kissing Bichette's brown nose. "And *a-propos*, monsieur, I know I ought not to ask, but is it absolutely necessary for madame, your mother, to eat boiled chicken every day?"

"It is a fancy of hers, mademoiselle, and all fancies should be indulged in the country. May I ask why you want to know?"

"It is very unwholesome, monsieur," said Génie anxiously. "It destroys both the complexion and the temper—it is even dangerous. Beef and veal come regularly from the town; they would nourish madame, your mother, far better."

"Is this your only reason, mademoiselle?" said Monsieur Canière smiling.

"It is the only reason I ought to give," said Génie gravely.

"Then there is another reason! Mademoiselle, I have influence with my mother. Confide in me."

"Chicken is so unwholesome," she murmured.

"Not to her, she lives on it! The truth, mademoiselle, tell me the truth!"

"I ought not," faltered Génie, "but—but—you see, it decimates the poultry yard!"

She blushed scarlet as she spoke. Monsieur Canière tried to conceal that he was laughing; he bowed low, putting his hand on his heart.

"Henceforth I will persuade my mother to try a change of diet," he said gallantly.

Madame Féraudy appeared in the distance carrying a basket, and Génie with a fervent "thank you" to her new acquaintance, went to join her.

Before a fortnight had passed Génie was quite at home with Madame Féraudy; more at home than anyone had ever been before, declared the good couple Maturin and Jeanne. She even coaxed and teased her and she did not mind, but appeared to like it. There was at all times something so bright and sweet about Génie that no one could resist her. The whole household loved her and did exactly what she wished, just as if she had been born the petted child of the house.

"I have a letter from my nephew," said Madame Féraudy one day as the girl came up to her. "See, my Génie, it is full of commissions. I must leave them to you, for I have so much to do."

"Am I capable? Are they within my powers?" said Génie anxiously.

"Yes, quite easy. I wish he would give himself a little rest, the poor boy."

"Is it long since Dr. André had a holiday?"

"He has never had a holiday since he

undertook this quarter of Paris, my child. And he works! he works like any horse! When I remonstrate he laughs, and says he is very strong, but after all, strength has its limits, and it is given to use, not to waste."

"He looks very tired sometimes," said Génie gently.

"Tired, and no wonder, considering that four days out of the seven he gives away the dinner set before him. But for his landlady, Madame Michaud, I do not know what would have become of him, and now he tells me he has changed his rooms. I hope he is equally well off."

Génie looked troubled; she knew that the new rooms were in a very poor place, but she thought Dr. André would not like her to say so to his aunt.

Madame Féraudy went on, "Father Nicholas writes to me about him sometimes."

"Père Nicholas?" said Génie starting. "That was the *pasteur* to whom I wrote."

"I daresay. He is a good man; he loves André as if he were his own son, and more than once he has been a good friend to him. Then there is Père Etienne of Notre Dame."

"But he is Roman Catholic," exclaimed Génie. "It was he who came to see papa."

"Yes, yes, but they constantly meet at the bedside of the worst cases in Paris. At one time he said to our André 'Come, *docteur*—submit, I must convert you!' and André accepted the challenge. It did not last long. Père Etienne desisted. 'Ah, bah!' he said, 'one might as well try to move the buildings of Notre Dame into the *Place Vendôme*!' He wrote to ask me to come to Paris soon after, that I might use my influence and carry off André for a few days' rest. He had cut his hand badly and in the foul air of those back streets the wound would not heal. André had to give in, and I carried him off. I could not help it; I said to the good father, 'This is a Protestant—*hein?*' 'Protestant!' he exclaimed. 'Go away with your Protestant! *Le bon Dieu* has few servants like him.' But I talk and talk, *mignonne*, and I have wasted more time since you came here than in ten previous years!"

"I fly!" cried Génie laughing.

She took the letter with her and began to study it. Dr. André wanted a little muslin pillow stuffed with chamomile flowers. He gave directions that the fresh flowers were to be gathered and dried quickly in the oven. It was for a workman's wife who had been a north-country girl. She had lost all power of sleep and was very ill, and her mind in its wanderings went back to a green slope of short thyme-scented grass, on the top of which grew a bed of chamomile flowers. She fancied that she was bruising them in her poor feverish palms pressing out the sweet slumberous smell,

and laying them against the wasted haggard cheek which once was round with rosy childhood.

This was the first commission.

Then he wanted garden flowers, and he wanted a water-melon. They cost so much in Paris; it was to be a treat for an Italian hurdy-gurdy boy with white mice, who had broken his leg, and who cried all day and all night for his mice which were taken from him in hospital. Dr. André was keeping the mice, and very tiresome it would have been had he not enlisted the services of a wild little street-imp of a girl who lived in the same house—Fifine, to whom he had once done a great service, rewarded by marvellous adoration and fidelity.

Then Dr. André wanted some butter and some fruit for a tea-party he was going to have, consisting of five children who had all come out of hospital doing him credit, and to whom he meant to give tea-parties until their little pale faces bloomed again. Half-fed children,

these went to his heart, and for them he wrote gaily, he would prey unblushingly on his farmer aunt.

The hamper that was got ready to go to Paris was crammed to over-flowing. Génie started to take it to the station herself, but she had to sit down constantly to rest on the way, until she suddenly encountered Monsieur Canière.

There was a brief contest between his elegance and his goodness of heart, but the latter conquered, and removing his gloves he carried the hamper himself to its destination.

"I do not know how to thank you, monsieur," said Génie gratefully as they reached the hot, glaring little station, and Monsieur Jean sat down and fanned himself. He was very warm, for the hamper was heavy, and moreover the consciousness of his good action gave him a glow of pleasure.

"You could never have done it, mademoiselle," he said, "It demands the arm of a man."

"It does indeed, monsieur; it was

too much for me. I am infinitely obliged."

They walked home together, and as they reached the door Monsieur Jean made a profound bow and said, "My mother is an invalid, mademoiselle, as you know. She bids me say that a visit from you would greatly gratify her."

"I will come with pleasure at any time that may suit Madame Canière," said Génie simply.

"Then this evening after dinner you will do us the honour?"

"If Madame Féraudy can spare me I will come."

"And, mademoiselle, to show you that your wishes are my law, my mother dines to-night on a boiled fillet of veal."

"You are too good," said Génie fervently, and she looked up at him with such deep gratitude in her soft grey eyes that Monsieur Canière there and then determined that his mother should try a sweetbread to-morrow.

(To be continued.)

OUR SUPPLEMENT STORY COMPETITION.

AMY'S DELIVERANCE.

A STORY IN MINIATURE.

FIRST PRIZE ESSAY.

THIS is not a tale of romantic heroism, as the title might suggest, but none the less interesting and infinitely more instructive as the story of a deliverance from that terrible if familiar enemy, Self. We are introduced to Amy Bowdon and her mother at the sculptured entrance to the beautiful church of St. Ouen in old Rouen. Amy is pretty, but peevish, and her mother, whose sad, sweet face betokens a recent bereavement, is hurt by her waywardness. She has undertaken this journey to La Belle France mainly in the hope that the change of environment may brighten her daughter's spirits.

Amy was the spoilt child of a spoilt father. An only son, and his father's idol, deprived of a mother's care at an early age, weakened by prosperity and praise, he had lived life for the pleasure it could give him, and had imparted not a little of his temperament to his only daughter, whom he treated as a playmate, ministering to her whims and pleasures rather than fostering the woman within her.

But life has its clouds and storms as well as its roseate dawns and purple sunsets. Amy's father dies suddenly. His own father, from whom he was estranged, had predeceased him, leaving his fortune for Amy when she should come of age. A liberal sum was allowed for her education, but Mrs. Bowdon had to meet heavy bills incurred by her husband, and resolved to economise and pay the most pressing out of the allowance made for Amy, keeping the true facts of their position from her until she was older. A "candid friend," however, out of revenge on Mrs. Bowdon for marrying the man she admired, tells Amy she is her grandfather's heir, and her mother is using the money and concealing the facts from her for her own purposes. She informs Mrs. Bowdon what she has done. Mrs. Bowdon weakly refrains from acquainting Amy with the true state of affairs, and

Amy, with a poisoned mind, mistrusts her mother.

At this juncture we are introduced to Edith Shepherd, an English girl living with her father at Rouen. She is engaged as governess to Amy, and, hearing the mother's story, determines to undertake the regeneration of her wayward charge. Her own devotion to her father, the filial love of the Bonnevals, whose *château* Amy subsequently visits with Edith, the useful work carried on among young people at "L'école Ménagère" have their lessons. Mrs. Bowdon afterwards goes to Brittany. Edith is invited to accompany them, but determines to stay with her father, whose sight is failing. Before they part, Edith wins Amy's confidence, and advises her to ask her mother all. Amy's heart is melted, when she returns home and finds a birthday present from her mother is a new frock and on it a silver cross, bearing the words "L'amour c'est le croix." She tells her mother she will be good, and, as she is now fourteen, Mrs. Bowdon opens to her the sealed book of their family history.

Shortly afterwards Amy is rescued from a great danger, and her mother's thankfulness for her escape finds a response which proves how perfect is Amy's Deliverance.

They return to London, where Amy continues her studies. Her happiness is complete, when a letter arrives from Edith announcing that she is about to marry Mr. Buxton, the clergyman who took them to "L'école Ménagère," and that they are going to start a housewifery school in the slums, and want her co-operation. The story leaves Amy verging on her majority, doing with a will the work that lies next her hands, seeking to uplift and instruct and to forward her Master's Kingdom, and bearing the laurel of a sanctified life as the sign of Amy's Deliverance.

EVA M. MOORE.

* * This essay is printed exactly as written without any correction.—E.O.

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TO THE COMPETITORS.

DEAR GIRLS,—It has given me great pleasure to look over your papers. I have examined them *all*, and find the average very high. The composition is generally good, and the ideas invariably so, even in the youngest. It is a great privilege to see one's own thoughts so carefully reproduced by so many, for there were 308 competitors. All cannot win a prize, but all can derive benefit from such an exercise, requiring thought, method, and care. Some were disqualified by not having carefully attended to the *rules* of the competition, and one seems to have mistaken the story; but on the whole, it is surprising and very gratifying that so many should thoroughly grasp and clearly set forth the ideas of another writer. If my little story has taught you a few things, or led you to reflect on the need of deliverance from our besetting sin that every Christian must experience in this life, I am indeed more than content—I am very glad; and I beg to thank you all sincerely for the honour you have done me.

Yours truly,

ANNE MERCIER,

Author of "Amy's Deliverance."

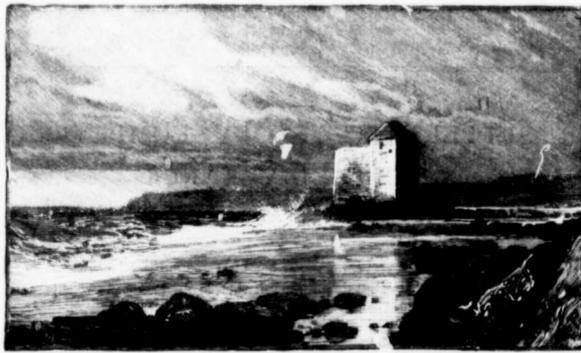
THE SAMPHIRE-GATHERER.

BY NORA HOPPER.

THE Samphire-Gatherer to the cliff-face clings
Half-way 'twixt sky and sea:
She has but youth and courage for her wings,
Though always Death about her labour sings,
And fain would loosen steady hand or knee,
And cast her down among life's broken things.
But Danger shakes with fitful murmurings
No such brave heart as she!

The gulls are crying in her heedless ears,
That strength is made a mock
At grips with the strong sea: she has no fears,
But treads with naked feet the stair of rock
That has but known for years on weary years
The touch of sea-gulls' wings, the sea that rears
Her waves against it with recurrent shock,
The sun that burns and sears.

She has no fears because her daily bread
She sees made manifest,
Here in the pendulous weed that tempts her tread
Upon so wild and dangerous a quest.
The samphire sways and dangles overhead
And home is far below, and in her nest
Are little hungry mouths that must be fed,
Though Danger be her neighbour and her guest.
Night brings her little children to her knee
For daily bread to pray,
Their father tosses on the open sea
Where flashing schools of silver dolphins play,
But hungry mouths must eat while he's away,
So the brave mother clammers, day by day
And pulls the samphire-trails, and knows not she
Is of that school of saints that wear no bay
But do God's work the still and splendid way.



HAUNTED.

By NORMA LORIMER, Author of "A Sweet Disorder."

CHAPTER I.

"AUNT NETTA," I said, "I believe you are the pluckiest woman in the world."

A look of pain, and something that seemed to wither up her dainty beauty, came into my aunt's face as I made this rather wide statement; and she sank down wearily into one of the old carved settles by the open fire.

"Lal, dear," she said, "don't ever call me plucky again. I'm nothing but a poor tired old maid."

"Oh, Aunt Netta, how can you say such things. Ned says he'd back you against any fellow he knows for sheer pluck. He says you don't know what the word fear means."

I turned round in my old-fashioned high-backed chair to lay my hand in Aunt Netta's lap, it was a habit we had of clasping hands for one moment when our spirits met in thought.

But no hand was open to receive mine. It was dusk and the great hall was gathering strange shadows in its deserted corners. It was the hour of sympathy.

"Sweet," I said, "I want your hand; and I felt for it, that slender little hand that no sun could ever burn, but there was no response."

Aunt Netta's hands were before her face and the head that was only now losing the

wondrous gloss and glint of its youth was bowed in them.

I slipped off my chair and wound my arms round her. She was so fragile that I could have lifted her in my arms. "Ah, sweet, what have I done? I would not grieve you for worlds. I only called you brave. Surely every woman would be glad to deserve the title. Ned calls me plucky when he wants to please me most, and I'm a coward compared to you. Last night you went all alone into the east tower. It was only a snail on the window pane after all, it is true, but it did sound exactly like a diamond cutting the glass. And there I lay in bed with my head under the clothes. It would not be any great act of bravery in an ordinary house, I know, but in this great lonely castle to go down these narrow turret stairs at midnight. It was real pluck and just at the very hour when the little scarlet shoes come patter, patter up the stairs."

"Lal, dear, stop! I can't bear it. You don't know what remorse is—a life-long remorse because of one cowardly act."

I stopped suddenly. "Remorse, Aunt Netta. Remorse has nothing to do with you." The interval of years that lay between us was broken at that moment, and I was now the comforter and she the weak, sobbing one my breast as I had so often sobbed out my childish troubles on hers.

"Yes, Lal, my cup of remorse is full. I have drunk it to the dregs."

"You never did a mean or cowardly act in your life, sweet. Whatever happened was not the result of any act of yours. Aunt Net (this was my childish name for her), what about the Humane Medal? Think of how few women have a medal for bravery?"

"Ah, Lal, that medal, it seems to mock at me every time I look at it. I saved one little crippled life, one that perhaps God meant to spare the burden of living, and another life that fair as a flower I— Oh, Lal, may God spare you the misery of remorse."

The great oak door opened, and James, our old servant, came in. Aunt Netta had straightened herself out of my arms, and her old-fashioned dislike of betraying her feelings even by the tremor in her voice prevented her answering his question.

"Shall I light the candles, ma'am?"

"No, James," I said, "my aunt is tired. You can leave the lights."

I knew that if a bright light was lit in the hall the spirit of confidence would be shut out. So James went out shutting the massive doors as silently as he had opened them.

"Lal, dear," my aunt said, "I will tell you the story of my life. I was just your age when an event happened which spoiled it."



THE SAMPIRE-GATHERER.

"Not quite spoil it, sweet, for you are happy now sometimes. Ned says you often look as young as I do. I don't think he really knows which of us he is most in love with" (there was a pretty little ring of confidence in the voice which belied the words), "so it is a good thing we are all to live together, and I'm sure there's enough room in this old castle for a dozen families to live together without quarrelling. Only don't make me jealous, Aunt Net?"

This last speech of mine made her quiver again. So I took her in my arms and kissed her wet eyes. It was a trick I had learnt from Ned.

I was Aunt Net's lover for the moment. Fool that I was to fancy she had never had one before; but I was young, and I did not stop to think that lovers will come where a face is fair like Aunt Net's, and the eyes are deep and true.

"When I was your age," she said, "and not half so tender and wise as you, Lal, for I was stronger and full of life, I met the only man I have ever loved. We were staying in the same hotel together at San Moritz, I for my father's health, and he for his mother's. We were thrown very much together, and I saw no shame in openly preferring his company to any of the other men who were staying there. Indeed, I had but little choice, for we were almost the only two healthy young people in the place. We skated together, we sleighed together, and neither of our invalid parents were well enough to act as chaperone, nor did my father ever think it necessary.

"Always remember you are the daughter of a proud lady, Netta," he used to say. "Your mother was an orphan with only her instinct to guide her when I came courting her, and I have no fear for her child."

"And so Robin and I roamed about the woods and hills all day long, I not stopping to consider what the future would bring. These were—I knew even then the days of our life that count, Lal—the days that lap into each other in a rare content. And so the weeks slipped into months until one day some little act of mine revealed to Robin how dear I was to him. Then he told me that he was engaged to be married!

"It was a cruel blow, Lal, but do not blame him, for we had proudly boasted to each other of our platonic friendship. I honestly believe he did not know that I loved him."

"Sweet," I said, "I won't blame him, for your sake; but if Ned was engaged to another woman whilst all the time he made me love him, I think I should kill him."

A cry of pain rang out.

"Oh, Lal, never say that, you don't know what you mean by the words."

"Aunt Net, you speak as if you had murdered some one. Your life has been so gentle and so tender, that if you did do one foolish act in your youth you magnify it a thousand times."

"Your love makes you blind to my faults, Lal, but I must tell you the rest. I bore the blow that Robin had dealt me as proudly as my mother would have done, and no one ever guessed how hard it was to be just the same high-spirited girl again; and there were plenty of eager invalid eyes in the hotel who, having no life of their own, poor souls, lived on the tragedies and romances of others. For a rather month we—Robin and I—played at being the same old friends as we had been, but things were not the same; a shadow had come, and our eyes could no longer meet.

"Then it was that a fire broke out in the hotel in the wing in which my father and I slept. It was terrible work getting him out of his room by the window, for at that time he was too weak to move out of bed, and as I have so often told you it was just as we had at last managed to save him that I got a wound

in my head from a falling beam which rendered me insensible for two days. When I recovered consciousness, Robin told me he loved me; it was scarcely hoped that I would recover, and, Lal dear, I would have died then willingly, for my father could not live long, and I was so happy in the knowledge that Robin loved me. His honour would not allow him to marry me; he had only a brotherly affection for the girl he was engaged to, but she almost worshipped him. She had been engaged to him for five years; it was a boy and girl engagement, with passionate love on one side, and only affection on the other. So what had I to live for? Only to see Robin marry a woman he did not love, and to spend my life alone."

"Sweet," I said, "say you are not quite alone; say it, sweet," and I caught hold of her slender body more closely. "Say that I am just as good as a real niece, Aunt Net, or better still, say you love me as if I were your own child."

Aunt Net smiled. "Indeed, child, I truly believe I do, though a mother's love, they say, is only born with her child."

Poor Aunt Net, she of all women who by nature was fitted to be a mother, had quietly taken her place in the world with the women who are judged as unchosen.

The long summer evening was drawing in, and Ned would soon be home, so I pressed Aunt Net to tell me more. I could see that even now she half repented of her confidence and would have let the matter rest.

"Did Robin give the other girl up?" I asked a little bitterly, for I knew that would rouse her to defend him.

"Robin give her up? No, Lal, he would never have done that. Robin was the soul of honour and as tender for others as he was merciless about himself. He only told me once that he loved me, Lal, and then he had been told that I was dying; but whether it was the knowledge that he loved me, or what it was, I do not know, but from that hour I regained my strength. But with returning life I grew jealous of Robin's promised wife. I urged him that it was wrong of her to hold him to an engagement contracted when he was little more than a boy. I implored him to tell her that he did not love her as a husband should love. I was weak and querulous, and Robin, half mad with joy at seeing me regain my health, listened to my tempting, but he did not give in. The girl loved him, and he believed that he loved her. For five years she had given herself to him in thought and in spirit as his wife; he could not break with her now. And so we parted.

Three weeks after my father died and I was left alone, the owner of this estate, and compelled by my grandfather's will to live on it, for half the year at least. When I saw Robin again I believe our love was stronger than before. Oh, how I loved him, Lal, and his big, manly adoration of my poor beauty made me proud of it for him.

"Then, Lal, came our temptation. The uncle who had made Robin his heir had married a young wife and he had now a son of his own to inherit his estates. With no expectations Robin could not afford to marry, at least not a girl who had been brought up as his intended wife had been, and at the best of times she was not strong, and now she was just recovering from an attack of rheumatic fever. I urged him to tell her that he could not afford to marry her, that his future prospects were utterly blighted by his uncle's marriage.

"And why not tell her, Robin," I said, "that you have outgrown your boyish love—you never proposed to her; it was an affair arranged by your family—tell her that you still have a great affection for her, and that if, after knowing that you do not still love her as you fancied you did when you were young,

she would still like to marry you, you will make her a good and faithful husband, giving her a friend's love, but not a lover's?"

"Did she hold him to his promise, Aunt Net? How could she, if she really loved him? Ned's happiness is so much dearer to me than my own, that I would give him up if he wished his freedom."

Aunt Net put her hands before her face and shivered.

"Hush, Lal, don't say that. She never had the chance. After that I went to pay a visit to some friends of my father's, who had taken a beautiful old manor-house in North Devon. My father had often told me about the place, and I knew it was haunted."

Aunt Net saw me shiver as I drew still closer to her. I almost wished I had let James light the candles. I glanced timidly into the corners of the great hall, but nothing unnatural caught my nervous glance.

"When I arrived at the old house, my father's friends gave me a hearty welcome; in a laughing way they made light of the ghost, and said that all respectable old houses were expected to have one. 'What form does it take?' I asked. 'For I too am the proud possessor of a ghost.' Then I told them about the pair of little empty scarlet shoes that pattered, pattered up the tower stairs, and ran along the polished floor of this great hall. The empty shoes of a little child who met with a cruel death. But their ghost, they assured me, was better than mine, for it spoke.

The story went, that in one of the bed-rooms in the oldest part of the house, at night, after the clock had struck two, a gentle tapping came to the door, and a pleading voice asked to be let in. 'It's only me,' were the words it spoke; 'please let me in.' The tapping they told me was repeated three times.

"Some of the boys in the house chaffed me, and dared me to sleep in the room by myself. I said I did not believe in ghosts, and would gladly do it; and so it was arranged that I was to sleep in the haunted room the third night after my arrival.

"But," said the hostess, 'there is one thing I must beg of you, that you say nothing about the supposed ghost to Miss Ivory, who is coming to visit us for a few days. She is very delicate, and since she has had rheumatic fever her heart has been very weak. I shall be deeply grieved if any one mentions the subject before her. She knows nothing about it, and there is not the least need that she should know. Her room will be on the same corridor as yours,' she added, turning to me, 'so please be careful.'

"But I had scarcely heard her last remark. 'Miss Ivory,' that was her name, the name of the girl that Robin was to marry; and so I had to meet her as a friend of my hosts; and hide from her the fact that I loved Robin.

"Is that the girl whom Robin Webster is going to marry?" I said. My hostess smiled. 'Yes,' she said; 'at least that is the girl who is going to marry Robin Webster, for with all her gentleness and fragile appearance it is she who is taking the active part. Robin, poor fellow, has been dragged into it—not but what she is not good enough for him in every way, for she is as good as she is pretty, but every one can see except herself that Robin isn't any more in love with her than he is with you or me.'

"Is he not?" I asked. 'Don't you think some one might tell her, she is sure to find out when it is too late.'

"Oh no," said my hostess. 'That would never do. Poor child, if she does not bore him to death, she will make him a good wife.'

"And so the conversation dropped and I almost forgot about the ghost and my promise to sleep in the haunted room.

(To be concluded.)

OUR PUZZLE REPORT: "ON CLOTHING."

SOLUTION.

ON CLOTHING.

A girl should dress according to her station. Having due regard to her work, she should always look as well as she can. She need not be a slattern at any time, but she should not use the scrubbing-brush in her best frock; Neither should she go out to dinner in her worst. It is pitiable to see a poor girl dressed beyond her means, and no less dressing to see a rich one attired in a negligent fashion. Therefore remember that clothing should be

1. Appropriate to station.
2. Appropriate to, and convenient for, work.
3. Proportionate to income.

PRIZE WINNERS.

Six Shillings and Sixpence Each.

M. S. Arnold, The Birches, Malvern Link.
Edith Ashworth, The Mount, Knutsford.
Edith K. Baxter, 21, Tierney Road, Streatham Hill, S.W.
Rebecca Clarke, 130, Newland Street, W. Lincoln.
M. A. C. Crabb, Red Hall, Rickmansworth, Herts.
E. H. Duncan, 41, North John St., Liverpool.
J. Ellison, 4, Ann's Terrace, Himley Road, Tooting, S.W.
Marie E. Hancock, 92, Richard's Terrace, Cardiff.
Arthur Wm. Howse, Swiss Cottage, Ashwick, King's Lynn.
Edith L. Howse, Falkland Lodge, Torquay.
Ellen M. Price, 38, Eleanor St., South Shields, Durham.
Marie McQueen, Dunreggan, Moniaive, Dumfriesshire.
W. P. H. Smiley, Weoleyville, Dromore, Co. Down, Ireland.
Mrs. Snell, 51, Mere St., Leicester.
Gertrude Sterling, 94, Algernon Road, Lewisham, S.E.
Miss V. M. Welman, 8, North Side, Clapham Common, S.W.

Special Mention.

Eliza Acworth, Edith E. Grundy, Lily Horn, Carlina Leggett.

Most Highly Commended.

Laura Paulina Barrett, Lily Belling, Nellie Burton, Agnes B. Chettle, J. S. Clemens, E. Conlin, Mrs. Crossman, Ellic Crossman, Mrs. H. Danell, C. M. A. Fitzgerald, Mrs. W. H. Gotch, Mrs. Grubbe, J. Hunt, Rachel V. R. James, Jennie A. Jenkins, B.A., Agnes Louisa Kendall, Ed. Lord, Isabella M. Maxwell, Mrs. Motrum, A. Nichols, R. Nixon, Mary O'den, Maggie Ormond, Rev. A. B. Orr, Sarah M. Pratt, J. M. Pugh, N. E. Purvey, Bertha A. Richards, A. J. Rogers, Alfred Scott, Jenny Smedley, Gertrude Smith, R. Carr Smith, Harriett C. Smyth, C. Taylor, E. M. Watnerston, W. J. Weston.

Very Highly Commended.

Rev. S. Bell, Isabel Bellis, Clara S. Berry, Alice W. Browne, Mary Carter, M. J. Champneys, Muriel Lace Clarke, Edith Collins, Alice M. Cooper, Ethel E. Dives, Jessie F. Dullew, Emmie L. Eden, Flora Filmer, A. R. Fooks, Florence Hayward, Jessie W. McLeish, M. S. Moore, Florence Moss, Mrs. Nicholls, Miss Norton, W. H. Ollum, Lizzie Peacock, Ethel M. Penfold, Edith Parkins, Ada Rickards, Edith F. Sellers, Muriel Sellers, Mrs. G. W. Smith, Minna S. Starritt, Mary Swidenbank, L. M. Todd, Aileen Tyley, G. S. Wilkins, W. L. Wishart, Emily M. P. Wood, C. A. Woolston, Miss Young, Katharine Young, Edith M. Younge.

Highly Commended.

M. M. Adeney, L. B. Ashford, Lindsay D. Boyle, Annie J. Cather, Mary I. Chislett, F. Clark, Elsie B. Connan, Annie French, Emily A. Gaddes, J. M. Goodchild, Julia A. Hennen, Florence M. Holmes, Kate Lambert, Miss Lister, Mildred M. C. Little, Mabel Merry, Winifred Nixon, A. Nunn, Emily Nunn, Margaret G. Oliver, Mrs. Prestige, Ida Rafford, Nellie Roofe, Elsie and May Sharp, Bettie Temple, Lilian S. Toller, W. Fitzjames White, Florence Whitlock, Hubert Wix.

Honourable Mention.

Esther Barton, Laura M. Beckett, Gladys M. Bernays, Nellie Birch, H. Blakerston, E. Blunt, Louie Bull, Mary Christie, Edith R. Clegg, Maud G. Collins, Mabel Coode, Annie Etherington, "Flamingo," Wm. Fraser, Arthur M. French, Edith E. Gregory, Ellen Hambly, Annie F. Hardie, M. Hodgkinson, Edward St. G. Hodson, Emmie Holgate, Rose A. Hoopell, Rosa S. Horne, Mary F. Howard, M. Jeffrey, H. E. Klein, Mildred E. Lockyear, Winifred A. Lockyear, Isabel M. Mackay, Mrs. Martin McKenzie, S. Mason, Beatrice Moxey, Helen M. Norman, Ada M. Pleasance, Polenarchus, Mabel E. Roe, Florence E. Russell, L. E. Saul, Major Shore, Helen Singleton, Bertha I. Skinner, Edith F. Smart, Mary C. Spalding, Ethel E. Spencer, Helen C. Stone, E. Ward, Elizabeth Yarwood, Sophie Yeo.

EXAMINERS' REPORT.

We have to record a very remarkable fact. An absurdly easy puzzle on the most popular of all subjects (we are writing for girls) has called forth only seven hundred solutions. What is the reason? Is it that common-sense views on clothing, as on many other subjects, are unpopular? Can it be possible that the majority of our readers delight to dress beyond their means and resent any suggestion as to the wisdom of such vanity? On the other hand, do any of them revel in untidiness? Do any neglect to preserve their best frocks from indiscreet association with scrubbing brushes? Indeed, we hope not, but we are a little apprehensive.

It was very appropriate that such simple and wholesome advice should be expressed simply. But the result has been a perplexing amount of perfection. In other matters simplicity and perfection are often closely allied; that the latter should ever be perplexing is perhaps less usual, it is certainly less desirable. But all this is very difficult to understand, much more difficult than the puzzle, so let us turn our attention to that. How often one's attention wanders from the thing in hand. We have noticed it over and over again, especially in girls, and the habit grows most disastrously unless sternly repressed. It is one reason why girls are, with very rare exceptions, indifferent (to put it gently) chess-players. Having failed to acquire the power of concentration, they allow their attention to wander between the moves, and when the mind is brought back to the game it is saturated and impaired by visions of new frocks or "adorable" Sunday hats. And so by an easy path we arrive back to our subject—clothing—having learned by the way many beautiful and important lessons.

Now the authors of curious readings must not mind being quoted because we do not refer to their work in any spirit of unkindness. Being over-burdened with a sense of our responsibility we cannot afford to lose any opportunity of being instructive, that is all. One of these curious readings, "She should always look a swell because she can," is, with the exception of "because," a correct interpretation of the

hieroglyphics. But it is far from representing our writer's mind on the matter. A swell is properly a succession of billows, or an increase in the volume of sound, and we submit with some confidence that no girl can be either one or the other. We have heard boys use the term in quite another sense, but boys have a language of their own called slang, a language which may, with much propriety, be left for their exclusive use.

Another reading, "She should always look across the sea for fashion," is less justifiable. It seems to contain an obscure reference to the wisdom of Paris in the direction of dress, or possibly to that of Japan which, now we come to think of it, is also across the sea. But readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER need not look to either Paris or Japan for suitable "fashions," so completely does their magazine provide for their greatest needs.

Take another reading, "She need not be akimbo at any time." She need not indeed. We have seen an arm akimbo and sometimes we have seen two, but an akimbo girl, never. We hope we never shall.

One girl commits herself to the statement that a girl "Should not bury the brush in her best frock." It is unusual to be called upon to bury a brush at all, but if such a contingency should arise we hope our readers will remember this advice, for we can very cordially endorse it.

Now just a word on one or two points and we will forsake the path of instruction. We have received complaints that a letter is missing in the title. At first sight it looks as if it were, but on closer examination we find *on* 100 50=on c1; we then find a *thin g*—and nothing in between. Nothing=nought and nought is represented by o. Put the o in between the two signs, and there you are!

The *scrubbing-brush* was often taken to be merely a brush, but at least two hundred and fifty solvers correctly identified the species, so that we could not accept "brush" as a perfect interpretation of the drawing. Another more serious mistake was the omission of the "a" before "negligent." This was serious, because "in-an-egg-l" was necessary to give the n for negligent, and if this was transcribed "in negl [igent]" what becomes of the a?

This or any other definite mistake excludes the solver from even the honourable mention list. It is very hard, isn't it? The only comfort we can offer is that we have to share the hardship; for the difficulty of adjudicating perfectly fairly when errors are so slight is very great indeed. It is hardly necessary to say that the solutions of the prize-winners were perfect in every respect, even to the hyphen in scrubbing-brush.

At last the letters begging us to continue the puzzles are beginning to come in. All express appreciation in the most kindly manner, and some are almost overwhelming. But when our readers write about the puzzles they should not ask for information about all sorts of things. How do we know which is the best time for planting parsley, or the best soap for a delicate complexion, or the best camera, or the right way to address "a Bishop who is not Lord?" As to the last, we suppose that, as Lewis Carroll affirmed of one who was not a Bishop,

"He would answer to 'Hi!' or to say
loud cry,"

but a milder form of address would probably be more suitable. But all such things are quite beyond us, and though we treasure up the questions we dare not attempt to answer them. Questioners should write each question on a separate sheet of paper, and should not bury one or more in a letter about any other subject. And with this final instruction we will say "good-bye."

THE SEA-BOY'S SONG.

Words by Rev. H. C. SHUTTLEWORTH.

Music by Sir GEORGE C. MARTIN, Mus. Doc.

VOICE. *Vigoroso.* With a hap - py song and a

PIANO. *ff* *p* *ten.* *ten.*

hear - ty cheer I row . . . my boat o'er the sum - mer sea ; . . . For the waves are calm, and the

cres. *f* *dim.*

sky is blue And they're watch - - ing at home for me, They're watch - - ing at home . . . for

cres. *dim. e rall.*

me, . . . A - watch - ing, a - watch - ing, a - watch - ing at home for me, . . . A -

a tempo. *a tempo.*

cres. *molto rall. e cres.* *ff*

- watch - ing, a - watch - ing, They're watching at home for me. With a -

a tempo.

thrill - ing heart and an - xious eye, I row . . . my boat o'er the cold gray sea ; . . . For the

p a tempo. *cres.* *f*

rall.

gale is up and the billows are high, And they're pray - ing at home for me, they're pray - ing at

cres. *dim.* *rall.*

a tempo.

home . . . for me, . . . A - pray - ing, a - pray - ing, a - pray - ing at home for

a tempo.

cres. *molto rall. e cres.*

me, . . . A - pray - ing, a - pray - ing, They're praying at home for me. . . .

cres. *molto rall. e cres.*

a tempo.
 . . . With trust in the Lord of Life and Death I steer . . . for the shore where is "no more

p a tempo. ten. ten. cres.

sea," . . . Where fa-ther and bro-ther, who lie be-neath, Are wait - ing at home for me, Are

cres. dim.

wait - - ing at home . . . for me, . . . A - wait - ing, a - wait - ing, They're

dim. p

wait-ing at home for me, . . . A - wait - ing, a - wait - ing, They're wait-ing at home, at

cres.

ff home . . . for me. *rall.*

ff rall. a tempo.

KATE DOUGLAS.

FEW monarchs have left behind them a fairer fame than James I. of Scotland. Generous, high-souled, magnanimous, a scholar and a poet of no mean order, he sought to govern in accordance with the principles of justice—principles which hitherto had met with scant recognition from his subjects. For up to the date of his accession, might had been right in Scotland. The strong plundered the weak; the weak robbed the helpless; the nobles fell to fighting whenever the spirit moved them, and at a whim plunged the country in the horrors of civil war.

To a man of the king's character this lawlessness and barbarity was intolerable. The cruelty of the tyrants fired his indignation, while the sufferings of their victims cut him to the heart. He resolved to put an end to this chaos and savagery, to curb the turbulence of his unruly chiefs, and to give equal laws to all.

During the whole of his all too brief career (for, unhappily for Scotland, he was king for only fourteen years) he laboured incessantly to this high end; but in so doing he could not escape the penalty of all great reformers, for if, on the one hand, he gained the loving regard of the more thoughtful of his people, on the other hand, he incurred the undying hate of those who had profited by the old order of things. The freebooting chieftains realised that they were being gradually shorn of their ancient privileges. The right of levying war was theirs no longer. Instead of being a law unto themselves, they found, to their unspeakable disgust, that they were to be bound by the same statutes as the common people! This last was an indignity that no self-respecting chief could endure, and therefore it came about that a number of the nobles grew bitterly hostile to the king and set themselves more or less secretly to compass his death.

Foremost amongst his enemies was a certain Sir Robert Graham, whom James had once mortally offended by committing him to prison for a breach of the law. So deeply had the pride of the Graham been wounded by this indignity that he openly renounced his allegiance, and, flying to the highlands, vowed

that he would kill the king with his own hand. Thus forewarned, James should, of course, have been forearmed; but, like many another honest man, so confident was he in the integrity of his own motive, that he scorned the precautions which one less innocent would have taken.

It was the winter of 1437, and the royal court had travelled north to celebrate the Christmas festival in Perth. There being no palace nor castle in the city, the King and Queen and their immediate attendants had taken up their residence in the Abbey of Black Friars, while the guard were quartered in the neighbouring town. The King and Queen were thus left almost unprotected, and seeing that Perth lies within sight of the Grampians, where it was known that the Graham lay, biding his time, it must be admitted that the prudence of the King was no match for his magnanimity.

The 20th of February was a gala day in Perth, and the Court had spent it in hunting and feasting. During their absence the conspirators had gained access to the abbey, where they broke the locks and removed the bars from the doors of the royal chambers. This was unhappily unnoticed by the hunting-party, who, on their return from the chase, sat down to a sumptuous banquet and passed the evening in mirth and gaiety.

It was just midnight. The last of the guests had departed, and the King was chatting gaily with the Queen and her women before retiring to rest. Suddenly the chamber was lit up by a lurid red glare from without. The women fell silent and looked at each other terrified. The King sprang to the window. The garden below was ablaze with torches and full of armed men. James knew his danger in an instant. "The Graham!" he cried, and he called to the women to keep the door while he sought means of escape. He tried the windows, but they were barred; the doors—they only led him to the enemy. Escape there was none. He was caught like a rat in a pit, with never so much as a dagger to defend him.

As he stood thus baffled, looking on all

sides for a chance of safety, one of the women remembered that there was an old, disused vault under the chamber. James seized the fire-tongs, and by dint of superhuman exertions succeeded in wrenching up some planks in the flooring. He disappeared just as the clang of armed men was heard hurrying down the passage. Keep them out! At any cost, keep them out till the planks were in their place again! The Queen smote at them with all her strength, but they would not sink level with the floor, and every instant those dreadful feet were hurrying nearer and nearer. "Bar the door!" she cried, and the women sprang to obey her, but—treachery! the bars had been removed, and the locks were all broken. What was to be done? Time was everything. A King's life hung on a second.

The assassins were at the door. Was there nothing to stop them? Yes, there was this. Kate Douglas, the Queen's favourite maid, had thrust her arm through the staples—a bar of flesh and blood. The conspirators were checked. They tried the door, but Kate, with clenched teeth, clung to her post. The Queen toiled on with the frenzy of love and despair, and the planks were at last driven back to their place as the assassins burst into the chamber, and Kate with her arm broken fell fainting to the floor.

It is a thousand pities that this is not the end of the story. But alas, Kate's heroism was only temporarily successful. At first indeed, the murderers were baffled, and they searched the Abbey in vain; but the secret vault was known to some of them, and they, returning to the chamber, wrenched up the floor, discovered the King and barbarously butchered him before the eyes of his Queen.

These were dark days in Scotland, but even at their blackest they were from time to time illuminated by bright deeds of love and loyalty. Kate's devotion has been the theme of poets and historians, and such was the people's pride in her heroine that they gave her a name of honour, and knew her henceforth as Kate Barlass.

G. K. M.

"MY ROOM": OUR ESSAY COMPETITION (FOREIGN).

PRIZE WINNERS AND REPORT.

One Guinea Each.

- Helen Jackson, Mozzuttapore, Tirhoot, Bengal, India.
 Muriel F. Carrall, Chefoo, China.
 "Armenian Sweet Seventeen," c/o British Post-Office, Smyrna, Asia Minor.

Half-a-Guinea Each.

- Margarida, Pinewood Villa, Portugal.
 Cécile Rahier, Rampe 5, Brest, France.
 Baroness Rosa Teschenberg IV, Gusshausstrasse No. 12, Vienna.

Honourable Mention.

- Mrs. A. Tooth, Ingleside, P.O. Manitoba, Canada.
 "Arrow," Ottawa, Canada.
 "Wattleblossom," Elonera, Wheatland Road, Malvern, Victoria, Australia.
 "Trinidad Heliotrope," Duke Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.
 Lucie Nathan, Avenue des Champs Elysees, Paris.
 Agnes Young Gemmill, c/o Freifrau von Masschall, Neisse, Schlesien, Germany.

REPORT.

The Foreign Competition Papers, describing "My Room," which have just arrived, have afforded the Editor unusual pleasure and encouragement; for not only have English girls dwelling in all parts of the world competed, but foreigners, including Armenians, Germans, French, Spanish and Portuguese, have done the same, and have sent in papers graphically described and exceedingly well-written in English, which to them is a foreign tongue; and to add to his pleasure one and all speak of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER as a friend who has elevated their tastes and helped them to live higher and nobler lives.

A Portuguese married woman, twenty-nine years of age, says: "I am a reader of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER from its very beginning, and it has taught me many a useful lesson both as a single and as a married woman. I do not know any other publication so complete and so thoroughly good as this one; and one of my objects in teaching my children English is that they may read it and learn by it the many lessons of usefulness, kindness and helpfulness that I have myself learnt of it."

A reader from New Zealand says: "I look upon THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER as having been a very valuable friend to myself and family, and I thank you with all my heart for the way in which it has helped me. I trust the Paper may long live to be a comfort and help to many more busy mothers and make the young folk of sterling worth, and pure and beautiful minds."

This is exactly what the Editor has aimed at from its very commencement, and he is deeply thankful that up to this time it should have fulfilled his mission, and with God's blessing he hopes to increase its usefulness and comfort to the girls all over the world.

If, as has been said, there is an atmosphere about houses, there certainly is about the rooms of individuals, and the Editor feels it possible, from the descriptions given, to picture the owners of the rooms as they sit reading THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, whether in the log houses of Canada or Australia, or in the sunny rooms of India, China or Armenia, and it is a special satisfaction to him to hear that in all the rooms THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER holds an honoured place.



SPRING FLOWERS

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

SLEEPLESSNESS (an answer to "Amy" and others).—Sleeplessness is one of the most important symptoms which a physician is called upon to treat. Not only is it the most distressing of all forms of suffering to which we are liable, but its causation is of a most varied character, and its results are often of the gravest possible kind. We therefore deem it advisable to discuss at full length this important subject, for we have received many letters from correspondents about this condition, and it is useless to give a brief account of mysterious and complex a complaint. Before we enter upon the subject of insomnia itself, we must first have a clear knowledge as to what is natural sleep and what is its cause. Sleep is the temporary cessation of the vital activity of the higher centres of the mind together with a partial dulling of the excitability of the whole nervous system. For sleep to occur two factors are necessary—the higher centres of the mind must be tired and all sources of reflex irritation of the centres must be removed. The mind is excited by impressions received through the special senses, and also by irritation of any part of the nervous system. When we go to bed we darken the room, we do our best to prevent our being disturbed by noise, and we lay perfectly still to prevent any impressions from reaching the brain. We have done a day's work, therefore our minds are tired; and we have removed all sources of irritation therefore we sleep. Now you ask us the very pertinent question, "Why do we ever wake up?" We said that the higher centres must be tired in order to sleep, and it is the recovery of these centres which causes our awakening. There are few of us who can go to sleep at a minute's notice, during the daytime, however carefully we prevent impression from reaching the brain through the senses. This is because our minds are not tired and do not need sleep. We do not go to sleep or wake up suddenly, but we pass from full consciousness to diminished mental power, then to a state in which the imagination is still retained, but the control of the will is gone, then deeper to a dreamy state, and then deeper and deeper still to total unconsciousness and mental inaction. This is normal sleep. We awaken in the reverse order, but each stage is more prolonged than in the converse state. This is the reason that dreams are most frequent in the early morning hours. As we said, all the nervous system partakes, to a certain extent, in the inaction of sleep. If the whole nervous system slept death would result, for the heart and respiration would stop. But both these two bodily functions are depressed, and we are all familiar with the peculiar deep, infrequent breathing of a sleeping person. Impressions are received more slowly and less distinctly than when awake. A slight stimulus, such as a faint light, or gently touching the skin, produces no reaction; but a more severe stimulus, as a shout, or a pin prick, produces a reaction slowly, and if sufficiently intense will awaken the sleeper. Here you will give us a very hard nut to crack. "If, as you say, it is necessary for the mind to be tired before sleep can occur, how comes it that after working excessively hard one goes to bed worn out, and yet sleep does not come, but the unfortunate person lies tossing about in a most unpleasant condition between sleep and waking?" The answer to this is that here the mental centres are exhausted. Now, the first sign of nervous exhaustion is irritability, consequently these centres become irritable

and react violently to impressions which would have no effect on the normally waking mind. Having described the process of normal sleep, let us now consider the various ways in which sleep may be modified; but as this answer is already of inordinate length, we will only be able to consider the causes of diminished or abolished power of sleeping. Sleep may be interfered with in three ways—either the person does not go to sleep at all, but remains fully awake; or she lies in an intermediate condition in which the imagination runs unchecked by the mind, and she is haunted by ideas of falling down precipices, or out of window, or being pursued by villains or other such thoughts; or, thirdly, and this is the most common, she may dream. These three are phases of the same condition—insomnia. From what we have said before it will be easy to understand that the causes of insomnia may be divided into two classes those due to interference with the higher centres of the brain; and those due to excessive irritation received through the senses, preventing the brain from sleeping. Now, the former class of cases is the less numerous and consist of three causes—the centre may not be tired; the centre may be exhausted; the powers of the centre may be perverted, as in insanity. Of these, the first needs no comment, sleep is not needed and does not occur. The third cause, insanity, depression, etc., need not trouble us here, though it is of vast importance. The second of these three causes is a very important cause of insomnia, and one that we must fully discuss. If you work too hard, or too late in the evening you will not sleep. Your centres have been overworked, they have become partly exhausted, and, moreover, your brain has become full of blood and is altogether in too excitable a state to sleep. The second class of causes of insomnia contains all causes of irritation—practically every disease and pain in any form; also such exciting causes as noise, bright lights, etc., and fleas (not by any means an uncommon cause of sleeplessness during the first few days of a summer holiday at the sea-side). In this list the most important items are indigestion, pain, and bright lights. As our space is rapidly coming to an end, we must leave this part of the subject and pass on to the treatment of insomnia. First, find out the cause, and if possible, remove it. Thus, if you suffer from indigestion, constipation, neuralgia or any other disease, this must be cured if possible. Not an uncommon cause of insomnia is eating a large supper. If you have been doing this, discontinue the habit and take nothing but a glass of warm milk at bedtime. Another cause is *not* taking a supper. Many people who suffer from sleeplessness find taking a light supper very efficacious for producing sleep. If you work too hard in the evening, bathing your feet in hot or very cold water immediately before getting into bed is often very useful. Let your room be absolutely quiet and dark. Avoid tea and coffee at bedtime as these of themselves produce insomnia. *Never* take hypnotics unless you are daily attended by a physician. Insomnia is bad, but the habit of taking hypnotics is far worse. The subject of dreams and night terrors we will attack at another time. If we have not made ourselves clear to anyone we will be pleased to answer any questions on this subject, for of course you must understand that we have not by any means exhausted the subject.

ACHUSHA-MA-CHEEK.—We discussed at great length the nature, cause, and treatment of blackheads or skinworms some weeks ago.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

LENA.—1. Your difficulty as to where to find recitations that are amusing and appropriate is a very common one. You will find several that are humorous in *What to Read at Winter Entertainments* (55, Paternoster Row), compiled by the Rev. F. Langbridge. *The American Reader*, by Alfred H. Miles, price 6d., is also useful.—2. We do not know the piece entitled "How three Bachelors kept House." Perhaps some of our readers will help you.

AMILLA.—We are struck by the poem you send us. There is force and passion in it, and music of expression in sufficient degree to make us think that some day you may be able to do good work. The third verse is decidedly the best. You speak of "his" having been away "nine long years," and still describe him as quite young. Is this consistent with what you suggest of the story? The chief defect, from a literary point of view, is the interchange of "thou" and "you" in addressing the same person. We should caution you to be on your guard against a morbid tendency, and should strongly dissuade you from attempting, as yet, to publish a volume. Store your mind with good poetry, and study as much as you can, to lay up treasure that you may possibly use in after years.

A. H. L. B.—1. If your friends like to read our verses and you enjoy writing them, there seem no reason why you should not exercise your pen in this way. The two poems you enclose contain nothing original. "Owen" and "Home" are incorrect rhymes. We think the first specimen, "Love," is the better of the two.—2. Your writing is fairly good, but it appears to us that you use too fine or "scratchy" a pen. Many thanks for your kind note.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

LYS DE FRANCE.—aged fifteen, wishes for an English girl correspondent, if one will send us her name and address for publication.

MADAMELEK MARIE ANNE CERNESSON. Sens (Yonne), France, 11 ans, désire correspondre avec une jeune fille anglaise; elle écrit en anglais, et sa correspondante en français. Adresse—chez M. Cernesson, professeur au lycée de Sens (Yonne), France, 1, rue de Montpézat.

MISS FLORA BOWMAN. 5, Granville Road, Yesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne, aged 15, with a fair knowledge of French, would like to correspond with a French girl.

QUEENIE (Jersey), aged 18, would like to correspond with a French or German girl, or both, of about her own age.

MISS A. S. MILLAR. Lynville, Dunblane, Scotland, having observed our reply to "Friend Studio" (Budapesth), offers to correspond with her in English.

MISS MARIE ENTWISLE. of 1, William Street, Darwen, Lancashire, aged 19, would like to correspond with a well-educated, refined French young lady of about the same age.

PANSY in a HUMBLY EDINBURGH PLOT would be glad to correspond with a French girl of about her own age (18).