

# MICHIGAN FARMER

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## THE HOUSEHOLD—Supplement.

### A FLOWER FOR THE DEAD.

You placed this flower in her hand, you say?  
This pure, pale rose in her hand of clay?  
Methinks, could she lift her sealed eyes,  
They would meet your own with a grieved surprise!

She has been your wife for many a year,  
When clouds hung low and when skies were clear;  
At your feet she laid her life's glad spring,  
And her summer's glorious blossoming.

Her whole heart went with the hand you won;  
If its warm love waned as the years went on,  
If it chilled in the grasp of an icy spell,  
What was the reason? I pray you tell!

You cannot? I can; and beside her bier  
My soul must speak and your soul must hear.  
If she was not all that she might have been,  
Hers was the sorrow, yours the sin.

Whose was the fault that she did not grow  
Like a rose in summer? Do you know?  
Does a lily grow when its leaves are chilled?  
Does it bloom when its root is winter-killed?

For a while when you first were wed,  
Your love was like sunshine round her shed;  
Then a something crept between you two;  
You led where she could not follow you.

With a man's firm tread you went and came;  
You lived for wealth, for power, for fame;  
Shut into her woman's work and ways,  
She heard the nation chant your praise.

But ah! you had dropped her hand the while;  
What time had you for a kiss, a smile?  
You two, with the same roof overhead,  
Were as far apart as the sundered dead!

You, in your manhood's strength and prime;  
She, worn and faded before her time.  
'Tis a common story. This rose, you say,  
You laid in her pallid hand to-day?

When did you give her a flower before?  
Ah, well! what matter when all is o'er?  
Yet stay a moment. You'll wed again,  
I mean no reproach; 'tis the way of men.

But I pray you think, when some fairer face  
Shines like a star from her wonted place,  
That love will starve if it is not fed.  
That true hearts pray for their daily bread.

—Julia C. R. Dorr.

### THAT CONUNDRUM.

Bess's question, as propounded in the *HOUSEHOLD* of March 23rd, has been so promptly answered, and in such harmony with my own ideas of the rights of the case, that I do not feel it incumbent upon me to add anything further, though the subject, if we take it from the special limitations with which Bess has so carefully defined it, is a wide one, bearing directly on home happiness and prosperity; and one upon which much can be said, *pro et con*. Humanity is ever ready to judge its fellows by its own strength or weakness. We are all quick enough to

tell what *we* would do under conditions which affect others. Yet no one of us can say with certainty what *we* would do did those conditions enter into our own lives; much less then can we even approximately judge what another should do under circumstances and conditions of which we are necessarily ignorant. It is the wife's duty to make home attractive, yet it is quite as certainly true that there are not a few instances where the wife's best efforts could not invest home life with a charm to hold the husband, because of his low and vicious tastes. He prefers the scandal of the corner grocery or the bar-room to any mild amusement she can offer at home. Or, without fault on either side, tastes may be so dissimilar that what is enjoyable to one is a bore to the other. Marriage has no magic to reconcile those who were never congenial; there may be acceptance of conditions, but no enjoyment therefrom. Mutual concessions make up the sum of living; such concessions are the foundation of marital happiness, but the self-surrender should not be all on one side.

Bess alludes to a subject of which I have often thought, the disinclination of farmers to go out evenings when it involves the necessity of "hitching up the team." I fear I fail somewhat in respect for the man who holds his horseflesh dearer than the mother of his children. The impulse which leads a man to refuse to take his wife out of an evening because he doesn't feel inclined to make a slight personal exertion to that end, is conceived in selfishness and born in what I am tempted to name downright hatefulness. The man who is from home more or less during the week, to market, to mill, meeting his fellow men, having a gossip over the fence with a passing neighbor, getting little whiffs from the outside world, does not comprehend how monotonous the days have been to his wife, who has perhaps seen only his face and those of the children, too young, possibly, to be companions for her, during that time. Almost every one will admit that the great drawback to farm life is its comparative isolation; when this is intensified by the selfishness which prevents the family from satisfying the social needs of their natures, simply through what looks suspiciously like laziness, and is certainly wanton disregard of the rights of the wife—for I hold that one person has no right through neglect or carelessness to limit another in a privilege which is

justly hers—it is doubly exasperating; still more so because the disobliging husband holds the "balance of power," and the wife can do nothing but submit.

Quite too many husbands deprive their families of the privilege of attending church during at least half the year, alleging in excuse that the team has been at work during the week and must stand idle in the stable on Sunday "to rest." The idea that to travel before a carriage or light wagon, at a Sunday-go-to-meeting pace, a distance of three, four or even five miles, is anything but healthy exercise for horses that are as carefully worked and fed as are most farmers' teams, is simply preposterous. The wife has worked more hours during the week than the horses, and ten chances to one, harder in proportion to her strength. Yet if because of her six days' labor she should refuse to prepare the usual meals on Sunday, a task more fatiguing to her than a few miles' travel to a horse, I fancy the most emphatic believer in "horse heaven" would protest. I have my opinion—and it is not a too flattering one—of those husbands and fathers who allow wife and daughters to walk two or three miles to church or Sunday-school, while great fat, strong horses stand idle in the stable; however humane to beasts, I know they are lacking in consideration for the stronger and prior rights of humanity. I shall never forget the bitter emphasis of a little woman, longing for some of life's privileges sandwiched among its domestic cares, who in speaking on this subject said: "Oh! horses are worth money, while women are to be had for the asking." The injustice, the unkindness of it, rouse resentment in the heart of many a faithful wife, who has worked late and early for her husband's interests during the week "for and in consideration of" her board and clothes, and who is yet often not permitted the privileges accorded the hired men in the use of what is her joint property with her husband.

Social privileges, especially to farmers' wives, mean more to women than to men. The latter have many opportunities of outside life not vouchsafed the former. Men like their wives to be bright, intelligent, socially attractive; yet what possibilities lie in a life passed within the four walls of the kitchen, with no fresh current from the world outside flowing through its stagnation! There is nothing in the world so tiring to the spirit as monotony. It makes some people ill-tempered; it sends the thoughts back up-



on self till the result is a settled melancholy which is like a pall upon the home; it brings insanity in its train. The man who wants a bright, cheerful, happy home, a contented wife at its head, must see to it that into that home life comes enough of the external world, its amusements its pleasures, its interests, to enliven and vary it. A selfish absorption in one's individual work, the fulfilling of the endless round of duties, indoors or out, is not living, it is merely vegetating.

BEATRIX.

#### IN THE WAY THEY SHOULD GO.

It seems rather out of joint, that the most married man the world has ever known, should be sliding along down the hill of Time, on the reputation of having, and of having had no peer, let alone the idea of a rival in wisdom. But so it is. And the man who counted his wives by thousands—for I eschew the distinction between the two classes of women who came and went at his call and command—and his children—well I don't suppose he ever undertook the puzzling task of counting them—but he instead, spent his spare time in writing out rules, precepts and regulations for their government, guidance and discipline. Among the regulations there is none that is more frequently quoted and consequently more frequently disgraced than is the one that suggests the title of this letter. It is also a truth that goes without saying—that is without saying that Solomon said it, but of course the inventor of it wore a Solomonish cast of countenance—that the children of old maids and old bachelors are perfect. Now as for those of ye old bachelor deponent saith not. She don't know them. But her testimony goes in on the "yea" side, for those of the old maid forever. They are perfect. Perfect failures! Therefore I shall not write much about them this time, but will tell you of a half-day and evening that I passed recently in the home of the Clovers. The "Clover leaves" were quite numerous when we left them two or three years ago, and still they come. But when I arrived at about 2 P. M., every chick and child of them, dressed in garments neat, with faces bright and sweet, with the perpetual baby asleep in his crib—were ready for a pleasant afternoon.

After a half hour or so their mamma sent them into the dining room with "Carrie" to play, and soon we heard sweet singing and sounds of all such kittenish play as children enjoy, and must have to be happy and healthy. When it was time to get supper, "tea" is hardly the proper name for the evening meal in a well-to-do-farmhouse, the children were left with me in the sitting room, with the maternal injunction, "Now be good and nice children." Little five year old Kate, with her black eyes and bright face, soon came with the *Youth's Companion*, open at the children's page, and pointing to a story said "Please read that to us." I proceeded with the story and soon had three

little Clover leaves in my lap, instead of only the "baby." Now don't imagine that my lap is like the lap of poverty, big enough to hold all creation, if they choose to tumble in, but please consider that these Clover leaves are very dainty bits of humanity, and there was in consequence lots of room. And how they did listen to the story, even to the one year old "baby George," now and then either Kate or Grace anticipating the incident of the narrative. When this was finished another was pointed out, and read, and many quaint, wise little remarks were made by the deeply interested audience. Finally, when the mother came to announce supper, she told me that those same stories had been read by different members of the family at least half a dozen times to them already, and that it was the same thing each week in regard to the contents of the *Companion*, which by the way their father says he has regularly taken and read since he was a small boy. And Mrs. Clover says: "It is such a help to me with the children."

And besides this there are books and books for the little ones there, the contents of all being familiar to them. Why do we not oftener see such a liberal, well conned supply of youth's and children's books and periodicals in prosperous homes that are alive with growing girls and boys?

"They cost too much!" a loud chorus replies. But it costs far more to do without them. "There is plenty of reading in the house without them!" a small chorus replies. Yes, but is it wise to bind tender twigs with cable ropes?

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#### FOR THE GIRLS.

Most girls like dainty belongings, and there is no better test of one's idea of daintiness and delicacy than her taste in perfumes. Too much of any perfume, no matter how fine, is bad; the odor should never be perceptible otherwise than in delicate, intangible, evanescent whiffs, a fragrance which never obtrudes itself but is suggested rather than more coarsely perceptible. Musk, an animal perfume, is a gross odor, too overpowering to be agreeable, and positively repulsive to many. The scent somehow seems associated with a fat, middle aged, overdressed, not too clean woman. The plan adopted by many ladies is to choose some favorite odor, as violet, rose, heliotrope, verberna—which is more objectionable, as it suggests Scotch snuff—and always use it and it alone. By using scent sachets among one's belongings, in time a faint, subtle perfume clings to them, and seems to become part of the personality of the wearer. Young ladies now use bureau sachets, which are made of silesia, or if one chooses to go to the expense, of thin silk, cut to fit the bottom of a drawer, and completely covering it. Between two thicknesses of silesia put a thin layer of cotton thickly sprinkly sprinkled with orris root, or any sachet powder preferred. Tack the silesia together at intervals. Similar sachets are made to fit the bottoms of gloves, collar and handkerchief boxes.

Peacocks' feathers are so beautiful that they tempt us to save them, and make us wish to use them in decorations. We may decorate a mantle lambrequin in the following manner: Take twice the length of the mantle in strips of olive green felt, cut the desired depth. Fringe the lower edge by cutting into lines as far apart as the ruling in a sheet of commercial note paper and the depth of the sheet. Fold the felt into box pleats an eighth of a yard broad, alternating with plain spaces of the same width as the box



pleat. On every plain space baste a feather, cutting it off where the fringe begins, so that the "eye" forms the principal decoration, then tack the lambrequin to the shelf. Cut a piece of felt large enough to cover the shelf and fall over the edge in a narrower fringe cut as described. This makes a simple but very effective and stylish adornment.

If you have an oval mirror, hang it flat against the wall, the longest line of the oval being horizontal, and surround it entirely with the eyes of peacocks' feathers, not lapping, but each showing distinctly. The beautiful tints form a lovely background.

If you have a fireplace, a pretty screen for summer use as a fireboard is made by cutting two pieces of pasteboard the size of the opening, and covering one side of each with peacock blue cambric. Trim the feathery fringe from some of the white stems; these are to form the handle of the screen, and eight or ten will be needed; if this handle is not strong enough, make another, to place directly back of it. Sew the eyes of the feathers to the outer edge of one of the pasteboard pieces, letting half project beyond the rim; then sew on another row, letting each eye be plainly visible; not crowding; and so on to the centre. Sew the other piece of cambric covered pasteboard to this for a back; and fasten the handle firmly in place; add a bow of peacock blue ribbon over the joining. This makes a charming substitute for the usual dull "fireboard," or the asparagus boughs, or even the box of growing ferns sometimes recommended for use in the empty fireplace.

B.

#### CRAZES IN GENERAL—TOOTH-PICKS IN PARTICULAR.

It is time for the spring "craze" of house and yard cleaning, in addition to all the other crazes. Now I dislike crazes of all kinds, and I dislike to clean house, and often think, when we have finished cleaning and have put the last curtain up and the last freshly "done up" pillow shams over the pillows, "There, how nice and clean every thing is, I wish the house would always keep so, and not have to be torn up again;" but time rolls on, and ere one is aware of it the year is past and it is time for the yearly cleaning (I take up my carpets but once a year unless for some unexpected circumstance.) In the fall we clean the wood-work and windows, but this is only one of the "sweeping days." By the way, right here, I wish to say to E. L. Nye, though you disdain to put gloves upon your "lily white hands" in sweeping, I think those girls or women who do are very sensible. It will in a great measure save those hard calluses on the inside of the hands. I like to see nice hands, and if by management and care, girls "in particular," can keep them nice and soft while doing housework, I think they should, even if they use the "five-cent mop" to wash dishes, provided they wash them clean. Many girls who play the piano and do fancy work are the only help their mothers have; and they

are help, too, do not "shirk" out of sweeping, washing, mopping, or washing dishes. The disagreeable dirty work is done cheerfully by them to "save mother," and if by any means they can keep their hands nice, so they are not ashamed of them when practicing or doing a delicate piece of embroidery, or in company, they should be encouraged and commended.

How I have digressed from my subject! This morning after we had finished washing I had the premonitory symptoms of the "spring craze," and started out to clean the yard. I was working away "lustily" when it seemed to me that Beatrix stood by me and whispered loudly: "You are one of the negligent contributors, take your pen and write quickly, before the symptoms develop into a fever of cleaning, which cannot be arrested for two full weeks at least." I put down my rake and thought I would say a few words to that "horrid man," "An Editor." I fully approve of what Althea has said. I think it only an absurd fashion to place a glass hat of wooden tooth-picks upon the table; but what is considered fashionable, many people follow like a flock of sheep if one who is considered authority leads. I know many cultivated people give them a place upon their tables, and I attended a church social a short time ago where the committee were careful to place them on each table, but in face of all this evidence of the correctness of the custom, I cannot look upon it as refined, and shall persist in keeping them from my table and be an "odd one," with Althea. I am quite sure "An Editor" has fine teeth, and is not ashamed to show them. If every one around a table had only fine teeth to display, then the custom might be pardoned; but the ones most likely to use a tooth-pick at table are those who exhibit broken or decayed teeth, or vacancies where teeth have been. Now, Mr. Editor, do you consider it polite to see one, two or three guests as soon as they have finished a meal, and before others have finished, take tooth-picks and commence picking their teeth, even if they do remember to hold a napkin over the mouth, which all do not remember or care to do? I think if I were obliged to use a tooth-pick while eating, as some claim they are, I would ask to be excused, and would retire where I would not offend others at the table, and remove the obstacle which had caused me annoyance, then I would return and finish the meal without further attention to my teeth, until I could retire to my room and use a brush.

I am inclined to think if it was the "craze," some people would furnish toenail parers, and expect their guests to use them. I think it would be about as agreeable a sight to me as picking teeth.

An Editor "wishes the independent flock, who care for their own cleanliness and comfort rather than the whines of fashion or the carpings of critics, to increase." Amen to that; but let it be in privacy of their own rooms, with tooth-brush and water, rather than at table in public with tooth-picks.

OLD SCHOOL TEACHER.

TUCUMSEH.

#### SOCIETY IN MEMPHIS.

Spring has come with a bound, not step by step. I am walking up and down the streets in the shadow of maples in full leaf. The grass in well-kept yards has tender blades, flowers from the green-houses adorn the borders; earth looks young again, but somehow there is no sparkle in the air. I know now it is the atmosphere produces the prevalent languor of manner and slow steps. I, too, am infected. My limbs feel heavy; I prefer lying down to sitting up.

Last week we took a long ride in the suburbs. As very little grain is grown here, and the heat of the long summers thoroughly cooks the grass, the fields do not present the verdant picture of Northern States at this season. Memphis extends over a wide area. There are many large, beautiful residences and scores of daintily pretty cottages dotted along all the new streets, but to my vision they are always marred by the presence of a dusky face sure to be visible at some window. The colored race as we find them here are so coarse, so ignorant, so awfully stupid, that one comes to feel sympathy for them only as we do for beasts.

There are no large parks or rural retreats if we except Elmwood Cemetery, which appears to be a favorite resort for many persons, from the mournful fact that pestilence has shadowed almost every family in Memphis, and they go there with pansies and loving thoughts, to deck the graves of the departed.

The churches are well sustained. We have been attending what is known as the Strangers' Church, presided over by a minister of the Talmage order, who is quite popular. His Sunday evening talks are delivered to large congregations. Going out in the evening without a male escort, white or black, is, however, a daring breach of established female etiquette. There are many handsome ladies who dress extravagantly in most excellent taste. Their garments fit exquisitely, and they are certainly excelled nowhere in the artistic application of cosmetics. I was a long time discovering that their complexions would not wash; kept dreaming that the climate and the moon would restore the bloom of youth to my neck and face.

While there is no outspoken contempt for labor, there is an evident undercurrent of aversion to people who come here in the capacity of employees. Unhappily there is no middle class, so that it is a sort of pioneer life to impecunious Yankees. We cannot assimilate with the "poor white trash," consequently must suffer spasmodic attacks of homesickness.

I trust my opinions, formed from a narrow experience, may not discourage any one contemplating removing to the South. It is unquestionably in the ascending scale, but Northern people will find the Southern people different in their manners and customs, all of which becomes more apparent after a few months' residence. We all know that time and patience adjust everything, even habits of thought are moulded to the surroundings.

"The heart aye's the part aye  
That makes us right or wrong"

DAFFODILLY.

MEMPHIS, Tenn



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pleat. On every plain space baste a feather, cutting it off where the fringe begins, so that the "eye" forms the principal decoration, then tack the lambrequin to the shelf. Cut a piece of felt large enough to cover the shelf and fall over the edge in a narrower fringe cut as described. This makes a simple but very effective and stylish adornment.

If you have an oval mirror, hang it flat against the wall, the longest line of the oval being horizontal, and surround it entirely with the eyes of peacocks' feathers, not lapping, but each showing distinctly. The beautiful tints form a lovely background.

If you have a fireplace, a pretty screen for summer use as a fireboard is made by cutting two pieces of pasteboard the size of the opening, and covering one side of each with peacock blue cambric. Trim the feathery fringe from some of the white stems; these are to form the handle of the screen, and eight or ten will be needed; if this handle is not strong enough, make another, to place directly back of it. Sew the eyes of the feathers to the outer edge of one of the pasteboard pieces, letting half project beyond the rim; then sew on another row, letting each eye be plainly visible; not crowding; and so on to the centre. Sew the other piece of cambric covered pasteboard to this for a back; and fasten the handle firmly in place; add a bow of peacock blue ribbon over the joining. This makes a charming substitute for the usual dull "fireboard," or the asparagus boughs, or even the box of growing ferns sometimes recommended for use in the empty fireplace.

B.

#### CRAZES IN GENERAL—TOOTH-PICKS IN PARTICULAR.

It is time for the spring "craze" of house and yard cleaning, in addition to all the other crazes. Now I dislike crazes of all kinds, and I dislike to clean house, and often think, when we have finished cleaning and have put the last curtain up and the last freshly "done up" pillow shams over the pillows, "There, how nice and clean every thing is, I wish the house would always keep so, and not have to be torn up again;" but time rolls on, and ere one is aware of it the year is past and it is time for the yearly cleaning (I take up my carpets but once a year unless for some unexpected circumstance.) In the fall we clean the wood-work and windows, but this is only one of the "sweeping days." By the way, right here, I wish to say to E. L. Nye, though you disdain to put gloves upon your "lily white hands" in sweeping, I think those girls or women who do are very sensible. It will in a great measure save those hard calluses on the inside of the hands. I like to see nice hands, and if by management and care, girls "in particular," can keep them nice and soft while doing housework, I think they should, even if they use the "five-cent mop" to wash dishes, provided they wash them clean. Many girls who play the piano and do fancy work are the only help their mothers have; and they

are help, too, do not "shirk" out of sweeping, washing, mopping, or washing dishes. The disagreeable dirty work is done cheerfully by them to "save mother," and if by any means they can keep their hands nice, so they are not ashamed of them when practicing or doing a delicate piece of embroidery, or in company, they should be encouraged and commended.

How I have digressed from my subject! This morning after we had finished washing I had the premonitory symptoms of the "spring craze," and started out to clean the yard. I was working away "lustily" when it seemed to me that Beatrix stood by me and whispered loudly: "You are one of the negligent contributors, take your pen and write quickly, before the symptoms develop into a fever of cleaning, which cannot be arrested for two full weeks at least." I put down my rake and thought I would say a few words to that "horrid man," "An Editor." I fully approve of what Althea has said. I think it only an absurd fashion to place a glass hat of wooden tooth-picks upon the table; but what is considered fashionable, many people follow like a flock of sheep if one who is considered authority leads. I know many cultivated people give them a place upon their tables, and I attended a church social a short time ago where the committee were careful to place them on each table, but in face of all this evidence of the correctness of the custom, I cannot look upon it as refined, and shall persist in keeping them from my table and be an "odd one," with Althea. I am quite sure "An Editor" has fine teeth, and is not ashamed to show them. If every one around a table had only fine teeth to display, then the custom might be pardoned; but the ones most likely to use a tooth-pick at table are those who exhibit broken or decayed teeth, or vacancies where teeth have been. Now, Mr. Editor, do you consider it polite to see one, two or three guests as soon as they have finished a meal, and before others have finished, take tooth-picks and commence picking their teeth, even if they do remember to hold a napkin over the mouth, which all do not remember or care to do? I think if I were obliged to use a tooth-pick while eating, as some claim they are, I would ask to be excused, and would retire where I would not offend others at the table, and remove the obstacle which had caused me annoyance, then I would return and finish the meal without further attention to my teeth, until I could retire to my room and use a brush.

I am inclined to think if it was the "craze," some people would furnish toenail parers, and expect their guests to use them. I think it would be about as agreeable a sight to me as picking teeth.

An Editor "wishes the independent flock, who care for their own cleanliness and comfort rather than the whines of fashion or the carpings of critics, to increase." Amen to that; but let it be in privacy of their own rooms, with tooth-brush and water, rather than at table in public with tooth-picks.

OLD SCHOOL TEACHER.

TECHUMSEH.

#### SOCIETY IN MEMPHIS.

Spring has come with a bound, not step by step. I am walking up and down the streets in the shadow of maples in full leaf. The grass in well-kept yards has tender blades, flowers from the green-houses adorn the borders; earth looks young again, but somehow there is no sparkle in the air. I know now it is the atmosphere produces the prevalent languor of manner and slow steps. I, too, am infected. My limbs feel heavy; I prefer lying down to sitting up.

Last week we took a long ride in the suburbs. As very little grain is grown here, and the heat of the long summers thoroughly cooks the grass, the fields do not present the verdant picture of Northern States at this season. Memphis extends over a wide area. There are many large, beautiful residences and scores of daintily pretty cottages dotted along all the new streets, but to my vision they are always marred by the presence of a dusky face sure to be visible at some window. The colored race as we find them here are so coarse, so ignorant, so awfully stupid, that one comes to feel sympathy for them only as we do for beasts.

There are no large parks or rural retreats if we except Elmwood Cemetery, which appears to be a favorite resort for many persons, from the mournful fact that pestilence has shadowed almost every family in Memphis, and they go there with pansies and loving thoughts, to deck the graves of the departed.

The churches are well sustained. We have been attending what is known as the Strangers' Church, presided over by a minister of the Talmage order, who is quite popular. His Sunday evening talks are delivered to large congregations. Going out in the evening without a male escort, white or black, is, however, a daring breach of established female etiquette. There are many handsome ladies who dress extravagantly in most excellent taste. Their garments fit exquisitely, and they are certainly excelled nowhere in the artistic application of cosmetics. I was a long time discovering that their complexions would not wash; kept dreaming that the climate and the moon would restore the bloom of youth to my neck and face.

While there is no outspoken contempt for labor, there is an evident undercurrent of aversion to people who come here in the capacity of employees. Unhappily there is no middle class, so that it is a sort of pioneer life to impecunious Yankees. We cannot assimilate with the "poor white trash," consequently must suffer spasmodic attacks of homesickness.

I trust my opinions, formed from a narrow experience, may not discourage any one contemplating removing to the South. It is unquestionably in the ascending scale, but Northern people will find the Southern people different in their manners and customs, all of which becomes more apparent after a few months' residence. We all know that time and patience adjust everything, even habits of thought are moulded to the surroundings.

"The heart aye's the part aye  
That makes us right or wrong"

DAFFODILLY.

MEMPHIS, TENN



## JUST BEYOND OUR REACH.

[Paper read by Mrs. R. D. Palmer before the Norvell Farmers' Club, March 27th.]

It is much more satisfactory and pleasant to always look on the bright side, and not go moaning and groaning among our friends, because things in the future look rather blue, if it is not within our power to make them any better. A good many of our misfortunes and troubles lose their sting at a nearer view, and when we come to bear them, and we may even be led to rejoice that they were no worse. But not so with the bright and beautiful, and the pleasures of this life. They look much more beautiful and attractive when we look at them from a distance, for then we fail to see their imperfections; but how we long to grasp them, when they are just beyond our reach! How beautiful the flowers that are beyond our power to possess. We may have some in our yard that are just as lovely, but we become familiar with them and they do not awaken our love for the beautiful, like the flowers that are just beyond our reach. With what delight one will work to obtain a water lily, when it is just out of reach. The most beautiful and tempting fruit is almost sure to grow on the topmost branch; and how delicious and tempting seem the clusters of grapes that are just beyond our reach, or perhaps are growing on our neighbors' vines; with what delight children look forward to the time when they shall grow up to take our places, and how we older ones puzzle our brains over the unseen future.

Life at its best is very short, then why this hurry and rushing onward? We have no promise of tomorrow; "only to-day is thine, wisely improve it." Some are dissatisfied with self, and are reaching after some other person's gifts and privileges, failing to see that they are only fitted for the little corner that they are placed in; but I will say, if you wish for more room, do all you can that is within your reach, and you will have no reason to complain of lack of occupation; for without personal effort, we will be dwarfs in mind as well as body. Look not with regret in the past, for it is beyond your power to bring it back, but go forth to meet the future with good resolution, and without fear. And let wisdom govern all your acts if you hope to win success, and show that life need not be a failure, and it may not be beyond your reach to become one of earth's noblest workers. The greater the privileges misimproved, the more terrible the doom.

Obedience is the test and proof of love, and all our strength and enjoyment are conditional on this. When we have neglected a chance for bettering our fellow man, we may even be led to weep for blessings lost, but we cannot recall the past; that is beyond our reach. There is much advice given to parents on how to keep the children within the fold, but not much said about the children's duty in helping to make the home pleasant, that father and mother may enjoy its pleasures. How many daughters have

grown up under the mother's watchful care, refined and educated, and are considered the ladies of the house, doing only the clean and nice work, for fear they will soil their hands or dress, while the mother does all the heavier work and drudgery! The care of the family proves too much for her, and at a time when they least expect it, the mother is through with this life, and is carried to her last resting place. The daughter can then see where she might have spared that mother in many ways, when it is beyond her reach, but oh, if she could have mother back, how pleasant she would make the home for her! How many daughters, trained in our public schools, might and ought to be of use to their father in helping him to keep his accounts, and in many other ways. The father of a large family, who toils hard all day at farm labor that his dear ones may be fed, clothed and educated, should have a nice cosy place, where he could rest in the evening, in an easy chair, and enjoy his weekly paper or some good book. Girls, help your parents in every possible way, and make home cheerful; kind words and deeds do not cost much, and they never give reason for regrets. Children should exert as great an influence on their parents, as parents do on their children; do not neglect these little acts of kindness until it is beyond your power to perform them.

Some parents who have formed habits of intemperance, when everything else has failed, have been reformed by their children, but those cases are few. How we should watch over our little ones, that nothing is thrown in their way to give them a love for the intoxicating cup, for it is claimed that some acquire this taste while yet in the nursery, while others inherit it. Mothers, be careful of your little ones; and while very young, teach them principles of total abstinence. For why should they ever be exposed to the vice that destroys so many of our youth, and blasts the hopes of fond parents. Can we say we have done all that we could, to place that temptation beyond their reach? Some of our leading professional men, who would have been blessings to society, when they took their first glass never thought of the downward road that they were entering, until they were going fast down the hill, and then to reclaim their steps, they find just beyond their reach. And so with a thousand of the other evils that we give way to; they become our masters, and we do not find it out until too late, that we have sold ourselves to a debasing habit. But if we have a trust in Christ, how beautiful and wonderful is the working of that unseen power, that will keep us from temptation, and lead us up to the very throne of God; and without Christ this would be just beyond our reach. This faith will keep us, though it may be unseen by our brother man, and we may be swept on with the grand procession of human life and events; and may we not, with this firm trust in God, let our lives be such that we may lay hold of other souls, and draw them in with us as

we rush onward to our glorious destination, that haven of rest; when if we trusted in our own good works, or our own strength, it would be just beyond our reach.

## HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

AN exchange says that salt thrown upon anything that is burning and smoking on the stove, as when something boils over, will stop the smoke and odor.

IN Italy dried tomatoes are a popular dish. The fruit is left on the vines until mature, then wiped clean and pressed through stout bags of coarse muslin, which allows the pulp to pass through but retains the seeds and skins. The pulp is then dried on plates. It makes a delicious soup, and can be cooked as canned tomatoes if properly soaked.

THE *American Cultivator* calls attention to a common source of "tiredness" in housekeeping. That journal says:

"By some inscrutable law, evidently as immovable as those of the Medes and Persians, every table is made of exactly the same height, and all women in the world, whether tall or short, are expected to work at the table as it is made. To avoid the evident backache that comes with a constant stooping posture, the height of the working-table should be elongated so that it will be possible to do all work, such as ironing, mixing doughs and preparing any kind of food, in a perfectly upright position. This will do away with the constant strain on the muscles across the small of the back, which causes so much trouble to the great army of women workers and wears them out before their time. It is an easy matter to lessen this fatigue; a set of blocks under the legs of the kitchen table, making it exactly the height required, is a simple remedy, and one that can be furnished by the quick-handed father and son in any house. Then a stool, just the right height, should be placed beside it, so the tired worker may sit at the table whenever the work permits, and give additional rest to back and limbs."

This is excellent advice, and our housekeepers will do well to heed it.

THE editor takes the liberty to quote a few lines from a private note from Mrs. R. D. P., whose essay appears in this issue, because it so excellently illustrates the truth that what we often consider impossibilities, need but courage to attack them, to become possibilities. She says "Our farmers' club numbers about forty. We meet the last Saturday in each month. At each meeting we have one or two essays read by the ladies. When we first organized four years ago, not one of the ladies thought they could write. But now over half of them take a part in writing for the club." So too, some who were very certain they could never, no, never, write for the *HOUSEHOLD* are now numbered among its most valued contributors.

## Contributed Recipes.

GRAHAM CRACKERS.—Half cup sugar; half cup butter; one cup buttermilk; half cup of cream; one teaspoonful soda; Graham flour sufficient to knead very hard, and roll very thin. Cut in squares. Mrs. A. C. G.

PAW PAW.