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THE HOUSEHOLD---Supplement.

WHICH SHALL IT BE?

[The following beautiful home-circle poem is founded upon an incident, where a rich neighbor offers to make a poor family comfortable and provide for the child, if one of the seven were given to him.]

"Which shall it be? Which shall it be?"

I looked at John—John looked at me.

(Dear, patient John, who loves me yet
As well as though my locks were jet.)

And when I found that I must speak,
My voice seemed strangely low and weak.

"Tell me again what Robert said;

And then I, listening, bent my head.

This is his letter:

"I will give

A house and land while you shall live,

If, in return, from out your seven.

One child to me for aye be given."

I looked at John's old garments worn;

I thought of all that John had borne

Of poverty and work and care,

Which I, though willing, could not share:
Of seven hungry mouths to feed.

Of seven little children's needs,

And then of this.

"Come John, said I,

"We'll choose among them as they lie

Asleep." So, walking hand in hand,

Dear John and I surveyed our band.

First to the cradle lightly stepped

Where Lillian, the baby, slept;

Her damp curls lay like gold alight,

A glory 'gainst the pillow white.

Softly her father stooped to lay

His rough hand down in a loving way.

When dream or whisper made her stir,

And huskily he said, "Not her!"

We stooped beside the trundle-bed,

And one long ray of lamp-light shed

Athwart the boy's shaven face there,

In sleep so pitiful and fair.

I saw on Jamie's rough, red cheek

A tear undried; ere John could speak.

"He's but a baby, too," said I,

And kissed him as we hurried by.

Pale, patient Robby's angel-face

Still in his sleep bore suffering's trace.

"No, for a thousand crowns, not him,"

He whispered, while our eyes were dim.

Poor Dick! sad Dick! our wayward son,

Turbulent, reckless, idle one—

"Could he be spared?" "Nay, He who gave

Bids us befriend him to the grave;

Only a mother's heart can be

Patient enough for such as he;

And so," said John, "I would not dare

To send him from her bedside prayer."

Then stole we softly up above,

And knelt by Mary, child of love.

"Perhaps for her 'twould better be,"

I said to John. Quite silently

He lifted up a curl, that lay

Across her cheek in wilful way,

And shook his head. "Nay love, not thee"

The while my heart beat audibly.

Only one more, our oldest lad,

Trustful and truthful, good and glad—

So like his father." "No, John, no;

I cannot, will not let him go!"

And so we wrote, in courteous way,
We could not give one child away;
And afterwards toil lighter seemed.
Thinking of that of which we dreamed:
Happy, in truth, that not one face
We missed from its accustomed place;
Thankful to work for all the seven,
Trusting them to One in heaven.

LIFE IN THE LONE STAR STATE.

I have had the pleasure this summer of meeting a lady who lives on a Texan rancho, where she is employed in teaching, and spends her vacations at the north. From her I have learned many interesting things relative to life in Texas, a few of which I propose to recount for the benefit of those who may be as ignorant as I confess myself to have been about this far off State, which has an area greater than that of the New England States and New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, is practically out of debt, and has thirty millions of public lands yet to dispose of.

The houses are built with wide verandas, where the residents spend most of their time, except during the heat of the day. Doors and windows are kept wide open to permit the free ingress and egress of air, and this lady complained of feeling stifled in northern houses, with their screen doors and windows which keep out so much oxygen. Tarantulas—a species of spider, very venomous and whose bite is often fatal—abound, and no one dares put on a garment, get into bed, or step on the floor with bare feet without a careful examination. Fleas are one of the great pests, not to be got rid of. The "cowboys" are not so black as they are painted; when they are engaged in their business of herding cattle they are as peaceable and well disposed as any of the residents. It is only after they are paid off and flock to San Antonio to spend their earnings and get intoxicated that they become dangerous citizens. Feuds are common, and a Texan feud somewhat resembles an Italian vendetta; no person concerned is safe so long as it lasts. Evening gatherings in the country are therefore infrequent; the ranches by their great size are widely separated, and every man prefers the safe shelter of his own dwelling.

Corn and cotton are the chief crops in the portion of which San Antonio is the commercial centre. Corn is not a sure crop, but the ranchers generally manage to grow enough for their own use. A weevil which attacks the grain in the crib prevents a surplus from being kept from one year to another.

The cotton is the "money crop." The principal wood is the mesquite—pronounced mes-keet—a species of acacia. A full grown tree resembles an old peach tree; the foliage is finely divided, and so scanty that it affords very little shade. The large edible pods containing beans which are the fruit of this tree are used as a substitute for corn for cattle-feeding. When the weather is very dry the corn is a failure, but the mesquite yields a generous crop of beans; when the season is rainy and corn flourishes the mesquite blooms but does not set much fruit. It is therefore a wise provision of nature that between the corn and the mesquite the farmer somehow "pulls through."

While the Indians ranged over the vast plains of western Texas, they burned off the surface every year, thus keeping down all growth except that of herbaceous plants. Since the Indians have been driven back, the annual growth has not been burned off, and the country is being overgrown with mesquite so that now it is necessary to clear up the land by "brushing it" before it can be plowed and planted. It is related that a man who made a contract to supply a fort with wood, when there was not a sapling growing for miles around, furnished mesquite roots which he dug out of the ground, and which were as large round as a man's arm. Fire cut down the sprouts which started up every year; the roots had not died but had gone on increasing in size.

The flora of Texas is particularly large and profuse. The indigo weed grows wild; it is described as a plant about two feet high, having light, pea-green foliage and long spikes of papilionaceous flowers of a pale yellow hue. Several varieties of lupine grow in great luxuriance; an artist painting a Texas prairie would need to spot it here and there with vivid blue to represent the great patches of this plant. Indian pink, a variety of which grows wild with us, is there a much larger and more showy flower, being of a most brilliant scarlet. There is also a bulb which bears a white lily-like flower locally known as "squills," but which does not come under the botanic description of the well known plant used in medicine.

Little fruit is raised, though two crops of certain kinds of vegetables are grown. The "northers"—cold drying winds which sweep over the State—are fatal to the fruit industry. Figs are raised in some sections, though the crop is uncertain; peach trees will flourish for two or three seasons, then succumb to a norther or a dronth, and when the dead trees are removed it is useless to plant others in their places: their growth seems to have extracted something from the

soil which is necessary to their existence and without which they cannot thrive.

In the country about San Antonio, where land can be irrigated, crops are sure and excellent; in other localities the dry weather may prove fatal to all the farmer's hopes. Yet the rainfall is increasing, as the land comes under cultivation. Many small farmers, who took up tracts of 100 and 160 acres, which they enclosed and cultivated, pasturing the cattle, which were their principal source of revenue, upon the public domain, have been forced to sell out through the purchase of these pasture lands by capitalists and large rancho owners, who enclosed them and cut off the pasturage. Most of them were compelled to sell out for what these large owners would pay; some abandoned their holdings in disgust and despondency.

BEATRIX.

HOUSE-PLANTS.

Are you going to have house-plants this winter? If so, it is high time you were thinking about it, and making preparations. For no HOUSEHOLD reader will, I trust, be so unwise as to wait until after the first frost, and then go into her garden with knife and trowel to take up and pot the straggling, over-grown plants that have bloomed all summer, lopping off a few branches here and there and crowding the coarse roots into a five-inch pot, expecting them to go on blossoming all winter. Such people never have "luck" with plants.

The young, thrifty plants which start out by the side of old ones, should be selected, and, after cutting off any blossom buds which may have formed, potted in good rich earth, kept out of the sunshine till well established, then grown on slowly till time to take them indoors. Keep the buds picked off, if you want flowers in winter. A great many people do not remove their plants into the ground in summer, but keep them growing on a stand on the piazza, and repot them in the fall, early, that they may get well established before going into winter quarters. Plants in pots are often sunk in the ground and allowed to bloom freely in summer, then set in the cellar till spring; the fuchsia responds to this treatment very kindly.

Don't try to have too many plants. Don't accept slips of everything till your collection resembles that of Tennyson's "withered misses" who showed their callers

" * * * slips of all that grows
From England to Van Dieman's."

Better have even one thrifty, luxuriant, healthy plant, which looks as if it enjoyed life, than a dozen starveling specimens without a baker's-dozen of leaves apiece. Don't fill up the one sunny window, and shut out the life-giving sunlight from the human plants in your family, and don't try to grow tender stove plants in the heat and dust of an ordinary living room. Rose and zonal geraniums, begonias, coleus, fuchsias, ivies, a few such common plants, will thrive and give satisfaction under conditions in which choicer ones would merely exist. Roses are not desirable for home culture if bloom is wanted; they require conditions of heat and moisture which few can secure and are in addition specially subject

to the attacks of aphids, as is also the heliotrope.

For potting plants, a mixture of good garden soil, a well rotted compost or vegetable mould from the woods, and sharp sand is most desirable. Secure good drainage by putting scraps of broken pots or crockery in the bottom of each pot. The earth from fence corners, under a sod, is usually quite rich and fertile. If you are afraid there are worms in the earth you have secured, fill the pots the day before you wish to use them, and pour boiling water into them. This will kill all insect life.

If you want flowers, do not use too large pots; a great many plants bloom much more profusely when their roots are crowded; some will not blossom at all or in but a niggard fashion until they are what is called "root bound." They make growth luxuriantly, but give no flowers. A six-inch pot is plenty large enough for a large lusty geranium.

L. C.

DETROIT.

COMMON SCHOOL MATTERS.

"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." When Jannette wrote her article, I wonder if she meant to stir up the female members of the HOUSEHOLD, in hope they would become so excited in debate that they would prove the truth of her assertions!

Of woman in politics I am not going to say anything, as I believe Jannette is right and also wrong, but I have not the time to explain wherein, for I wish to say a word in regard to the privilege of attending school meetings and voting.

Yes, the ballot is given women at school meetings, but how many use their power? Perhaps they think this a very insignificant favor the "lords of creation" have bestowed upon the weaker sex, but I think we better use the privileges we have and show ourselves capable and worthy before asking for more. If women would attend school-meetings and take a more active interest in matters pertaining to our common schools they might find them a power for good of which they might be proud.

A year ago I asked a neighbor of mine if she would attend the school-meeting with me, as there were some matters I would have liked to have brought before the meeting that I knew the men would not think of, as they were out of their ordinary course of business, yet were of importance to the district. She very disdainfully replied, "Not much will I go; I will let the men take care of their own business." The words and manner were like a hot wind and I—wilted. If all women feel like this it will be of little use for me to urge attendance at school meetings, or even a common interest in school matters.

It has been my privilege to do some extra work in school matters the past spring, and I find a lack, not of thorough interest and honest work among teachers, but of interest and hearty support and appreciation among the patrons of the schools. It must be a lack of interest when school houses are suffered to become weather-beaten and dilapidated until they are not fit for habitations, and yet the children are sent there year after year, at an age when surroundings

should have much to do with formation of character.

If there is a bleak place in the district it is good enough for a school house, and accordingly one is built, and too often left without protection or ornamentation of any kind. Think you we would leave our homes thus?

Our dwellings, barns, sheds and pig-pens, bristle with lightning rods to protect buildings and occupants. Are the majority of school houses with the precious lives therein a great part of the time, thus protected? Would we leave our homes without a single tree or shrub to beautify the grounds? Would we leave our living rooms curtainless or with dirty rags at the windows, and think our surroundings pleasant, or expect our boys and girls to be smart, contented and happy? How often are the walls in our country school houses kalsomined or white-washed, to say nothing of papering; and how often is the stove-pipe cleaned out to prevent the house from being a smokehouse, or how often is the stove blacked so the children will not get the impression iron is red?

Perhaps you may think I am overdrawing the picture and am referring to past ages. I wish there were no such school houses or surroundings, but look about you and see if you cannot find some. If you do not find all the deficiencies in your own district, I am quite sure you will find some, and if you would attend school meetings and if nothing more call attention of husbands and brothers to many of these minor matters, I think in a few years there would be a decided improvement in the appearance of school property. Were not I occupying too much space I would like to tell you about our cosy school room, and how the children's interest was awakened to make it so, until a visiting teacher made the remark to the teacher, who was teaching (not wielding the rod): "You only need some rugs scattered over the floor to make it complete." The house is low, old-fashioned and old, but has been kept in repair, and the interior makes one forget the external appearance. Yet there are deficiencies of which I have spoken. The country will soon hold its school meetings; I wish that every one would attend, and find out if any any improvements are needed, if so, do not hesitate to tax yourself in order that they may be made.

Self-imposed taxes should not be considered burdensome, and every person in the country should feel that our common schools are of personal interest.

In another article I may write of text books and classification of pupils as I find them, and then of the teachers and their work.

OLD SCHOOL TEACHER.

TECUMSEH.

POPPY says: Tell Mrs. H. S. B. to put the vinegar on the pickles, hot, three mornings in succession, using the same vinegar. Then throw it away and put the pickles into fresh vinegar, cold, unless she wishes to spice them. Then the sugar and spice should be boiled with the vinegar and poured over the pickles while hot. Large cucumbers, picked before they begin to turn yellow or their seeds harden, pared, and cut into quarters, make nice pickles in this way, and are less trouble than to pick so many little ones.

THE OLD QUESTION.

Evangeline, in her article on "Kitchen Culture," propounds that old, old conundrum: "What is the reason that housework is shunned, looked upon as degrading, is in fact the last thing a girl will resort to for a living?"

The answer lies neither in the work nor the wages, but almost altogether in the matter of social position. I am sure that the clause most quoted from our famous Declaration of Independence is that which declares "all men are born free and equal." That means they are equal in the eye of the law, that Justice must be impartial, but is more often taken to mean that one man is the peer of another in all things, which he isn't, by a good deal. There are lines of social demarkation in every land; there always will be. In America these lines are less rigidly marked than in certain foreign countries, where it is difficult for a man or woman to rise out of the class in which they were born, except by phenomenal force of intellect or genius; but even here an aristocracy of wealth and family and official place is drawing its fine net of exclusiveness tighter and tighter, and excluding more and more of "grosser clay"—that solid substantial middle class that has neither the enervating luxuries of the rich nor the vices and ignorance of the poor. I do not agree with Griselda in thinking the aristocracy of family and position is dying out or being replaced by that of money. I hear the questions "Who was her father?" "What relatives has she?" far too often; and I notice too how eagerly every person connected with one who has won renown or become noted in any way, advertises that relationship. Everybody is engaged in the struggle for personal aggrandizement.

We never shall have different conditions regarding housework, so long as it is tacitly considered at the very foot of the ladder. These gradations of "respectability" in labor are very amusing, pitifully so sometimes. The sewing-girl looks down upon the domestic; the saleswoman uptilts her pretty nose at both; the stenographer feels her position lifts her a notch above all three, and so it goes. And what does it all amount to! In the light of real, true, earnest living all these petty distinctions among those who all alike serve others, sink into nothingness, and we recognize that the only real kinship is appreciation of kindred qualities. But our opinions do not alter existing conditions; we must take the world as we find it.

Sometimes we are inclined to grumble because parents in humbler circumstances educate their children out of their position in life, we think, bringing them up with ideas beyond their station. But it is in the more humble classes that social caste means most. You should have heard the supercilious air with which my washwoman, who does washing at home, once spoke of a neighbor who went out to wash by the day! And when such people slave by night and day to bring up their girls to what they think a more exalted station, better positions, broader lives, are they not doing in their way—which is sometimes I admit a mistaken way—exactly what parents in other

spheres of action are doing, trying to give the children more advantages and fit them for better paid work than they themselves could receive in youth? And is not their ambition commendable?

Evangeline's query is answered by a "Down East" young woman in this fashion:

"I think that one reason young women choose trades instead of domestic service as their means of livelihood is because they all look forward to marriage as the chief end and aim in life, and they have an idea that if they become servants they lose all chance of future happiness. This is particularly the case in New York State. If a respectable man in the country marries somebody's 'hired girl,' no matter how well-mannered she may be, it will take some time to satisfy the neighbors that she is as good as they are, and they are not quite prepared to receive her in their midst, although in the course of time her position among them is generally established."

There you have the "social position" again.

It is a singular fact that though a man may rise from the humblest to the highest place, and the fact be everywhere told to his credit, indeed to his honor, if a woman ever comes from a low place in the same way, the fact is remembered as an implied reproach. The taint of the dishwater seems to "linger there still." And the meanest, most ignoble thing of all is that it is her sister women who thus by their sneers and sarcasms keep alive her humiliation. They make it a humiliation to her, though she herself may not feel it such. Men never think of casting it up against her; rather I think they honor her more for the energy and ambition she has displayed. This feeling was well illustrated somewhat less than a year ago, on the occasion of President Cleveland's proposed visit to St. Paul. A reception was to be arranged in honor of the distinguished guests, Mrs. Cleveland being in the party. The gentlemen who made out the list of ladies who were to "receive," included one, wife of an ex-senator, beautiful, intelligent, accomplished, but who had been a dressmaker before her marriage. When the other women on the list heard this, they held an indignation meeting and notified the committee that if "the dressmaker" was to be invited, they would have nothing to do with the entertainment. And so the whole scheme fell through. Nothing was alleged against virtue or character, the whole charge was that she had supported herself by the labor of her hands in her youth. And the best part of the whole story is that when this lady's husband was in Congress, Mrs. Cleveland had been a frequent visitor at their house and had on one occasion with her husband spent a Sunday at their summer cottage.

Now you know very well that every school boy is taught that he may possibly, if he masters the multiplication table and don't go fishing on Sunday, get to be governor of the State or president of the nation. So too why should not the washerwoman's or the "scrub-lady's" daughter become his wife and share the dignity of his position? How important then, that about her early life should linger no odor of soapsuds, no memories of the kitchen. True, she may never reach this exaltation, but at least she

will have the blessed assurance that if fate had called her there, she would have been qualified for the place.

BEATRICK.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Are we doing right? is a question each parent must ask in the training and education of our boys and girls, and in case of failure, is the fault more in the parent than in the child? I am not a convert to the theory that love alone should be the only guide to govern and rule our children, for when once we give way that they know better than ourselves, we have lost that controlling power that we can never regain. In our own time perhaps we have struggled with poverty, endured hardships that built us up to bear the buffets of life and made men and women of us. Naturally we desire that our children shall have a better time. I believe that I have seen this pampering sentiment of love, and "higher" education lead too much to a desire to get a living without work, or a tendency to look down on farm work as degrading. Work is not drudgery only as we make it such, and there is more true love shown in teaching our boys and girls to do any work, and take pleasure in doing it well. With all our machinery the cradle and the scythe must cut the corners, and we cannot all ride a plow. The girls I will not say much about. "Evangeline" gave them a training, but I have seen girls well "brought up" with higher education on the brain, that I thought would never make a poor fellow a good housekeeper. We cannot live on love alone, and when the wants of the body are denied, there is a "jar," or link dropped out of the chain that once bound two hearts in one.

ANTI-OVER.

PLAINWELL.

A READER, of Parshallville, asks how to can green corn properly, so that it will keep. The process at the canning factories is to cut the corn from the cob, press into the can all it will hold, put on the cover, and place the cans in water which is gradually heated to the boiling point, and cook a length of time depending upon the size of the cans. This process has been successfully imitated by certain of our readers, who have filled the cans with the cut corn, pressing it in until the milk ran over, screwing on the covers not quite tight, placing the cans on slats in the wash boiler, and when done, which will be in perhaps three hours, screwing the tops tightly to place. Others have failed, declaring they performed every part of the process exactly according to directions. The reason of the failure was probably the insufficient cooking of the corn in the center of the can. To can corn by the use of tartaric acid, which is regarded as a safe method though not giving the best results, the following formula is as good as any: Dissolve $1\frac{1}{4}$ ounces of tartaric acid in one-half pint of water. Cut the corn from the cob, let it come to the boiling point, so all of it will be thoroughly scalded, and allow one tablespoonful of the acid solution to each pint of corn. When desired to use it, neutralize the acid by using one teaspoonful of soda to three pints of corn.

FOR THE GIRLS.

A correspondent of *Women's Work* tells the girls some of her secrets, as follows: "You can have a pretty gilded rocker at an expense of twenty-five cents, and you need not trouble to sandpaper and scrape the paint off; either. Pour some varnish into an old teacup, adding a little turpentine, spread a couple of newspapers on the kitchen table, and give part of the chair a thin coat of varnish. In a few minutes, when the varnish is "tacky," not dry, put on the bronze, and with a bit of chamois rolled up in a ball, rub lightly back and forth till evenly covered.

"In a few hours put on another coat of varnish and bronze, and then the third one, then it will not rub off."

A home made screen can be manufactured with a little work and small expense, and is useful in the kitchen to keep the heat of the fire from the worker, and in many other places in the house: Fasten two clothes-racks together with hinges; cover the panels thus made with common cotton cloth, cut as wide as the panels, tack firmly at the bottom; then stretch tightly over the frame and fasten securely at the bottom on the other side; also fasten the cloth firmly to the sides. Now fill the whole with a thin coat of glue size, this causes the cotton to shrink and makes the frame work very solid, also giving a nice surface to work upon. Go over the frame with black shellac and rub to a soft surface with emery cloth. You can then decorate in any way preferred. Pretty wall paper, used for dado and frieze, with a plain space between, which may be covered with olive, dark red, sage green, or any color of paper preferred. A pretty ceiling paper with gilt stars is not bad.

Birch bark pictures are very pretty for home decoration. Take a nice smooth sheet of bark any size desired, and fasten firmly with mucilage to a piece of thin cardboard; decorate with the brush or arrange pressed autumn leaves and ferns upon it in any way desired. Pretty frames for pictures of this kind are made by cutting from thin, unplanned boards pieces the size desired, and glue together. At each corner, or, if the frames are large, at equal distances apart, arrange groups of tiny acorns in their cups and glue firmly to the frames, and gild the whole. The unplanned wood when gilded gives the appearance of rough gilt. Cornucopias made of bark bound with ribbon decorated with autumn leaves and ferns and filled with dried grasses are rather pretty. Place at the points pretty bows of ribbon, to the ends of which attach tiny gilded acorns in their cups. Another pretty receptacle for dried grasses is a round box any depth and width desired, covered with bark, ornamented in front a little above half way with a bunch of pine or hemlock burrs glued on firmly, varnished or bronzed, or both. At the bottom of the bunch is fastened a broad satin ribbon bow, from the ends of which fall small burrs. The bottom and top are finished by broad bands of ribbon. The width of the ribbon depends upon the size of the box. A pretty ornament for the front of this box instead of the burrs is a small bunch of dried grasses tied with a bow of ribbon. The

burrs at the ends of the ribbon may be fastened by small brass-headed tacks. These are only a few of the things for which birch bark can be used, and as it serves the purpose of perforated cardboard, the making of one article will suggest the making of another.

CUCUMBER PICKLES.

A. D. Grover, of Ann Arbor, desires to know how to put up cucumbers in salt brine, and also in liquor, making what is known as "whiskey pickles."

For the small quantity usually put up for home consumption, as good a way as any is to wash the cucumbers and pack them in alternate layers with plenty of salt which soon forms a brine, which preserves them until needed, when they are freshened by several days' soaking in water changed daily, and put into vinegar. When large quantities are put up, they are thrown—after being washed—into a weak brine in which they remain two or three days, then put into a barrel or cask and covered with strong brine. They should be covered with a cloth weighted to keep them under the brine.

We have no directions for putting up cucumbers in liquor, nor are we able to obtain any. The "whiskey pickles" of commerce, are, we think, put down in brine at first, and after freshening, put into white wine vinegar, which gives the sharp tang. A recipe which we find in an exchange is as follows: "Take one quart of good alcohol to four quarts of water; put the cucumbers in fresh from the vines, after wiping them with a wet cloth, or washing and draining them. Keep in a warm place until fit for the table; then keep in a cellar or other cool place."

If any of our readers can furnish other information, Mr. Grover will be glad to receive it.

COOKING POTATOES.

Our potato crop was brought into the cellar last night, and as quite the largest share of them are about the size of marbles, the question before the house now is, how are they to be disposed of?

As I understand the bulk of the crop throughout the State is in much the same condition, perhaps a few ideas exchanged on the methods of preparing them for the table might be mutually beneficial.

The very smallest are the best eating if nicely cooked and served hot; that is necessary to any potato to have it in its prime. When I have enough time at my disposal to do so, I sort out the little ones and fill a large dinner pot, boil quickly, pour off the water and allow the potatoes to cool, then take off their jackets, as grandma would say, and set them in the refrigerator or a cool place. It will be but little trouble to put a quantity in the spider, with sufficient butter or pork drippings and salt to season, and fried brown, they are really delicious. I have known of several families who bought small potatoes on account of the difference in price between them and large ones, and used them principally in that way.

The next larger grade can be washed clean and baked in a quick oven. It will

take but a few minutes to bake them, and they should be sent to the table direct from the oven; but of all things a gritty baked potato is—well, bad enough, so be sure they are above reproach.

Last spring when we had potatoes through all the grades of good, bad and indifferent, the ladies of our Farmers' Club took up the subject and we received some good ideas. One member said she could make soggy potatoes really palatable by boiling quickly and removing from the fire just as soon as they were done, then pour off the water and mash well with plenty of seasoning. The point was to not allow them to cook a moment after they were tender, to absorb water.

Another member gave directions for baking, which I have tried and found very nice. Pare large potatoes, cut in quarters or eighths, fill a pie tin or dripping pan, sprinkle with pepper, salt and bits of butter or drippings and bake quickly. This makes a nice supper dish.

When potatoes are scarce I mix small pieces of moist bread with warmed over potatoes, let them brown, and it is not bad at all.

After a season of substitutes for potatoes in the shape of pancakes, johnny cake, fried bread, gems and what not, we are ready to receive with gratitude and make allowance for the genuine article even if they are

SMALL POTATOES.

GRASS LAKE.

Useful Recipes.

SALT MACKEREL WITH CREAM SAUCE.—Wash and soak a mackerel over night. In the morning put into a baking dish and pour over one pint of milk. Bake twenty minutes. Remove; strain the milk; melt one tablespoonful butter, add one tablespoonful flour and pour on the hot milk; add one saltspoonful pepper and pour over the mackerel.

STEWED TOMATOES.—Pour boiling water over the tomatoes and then remove the skins. Cut the tomatoes into pieces, rejecting any hard or green parts; put them in a porcelain-lined or granite pan; add one slice of onion and simmer gently for thirty minutes, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon. When done add three ounces of butter to every quart of tomatoes; season with salt and pepper to taste. Do not add flour or bread, as they destroy the flavor and color. The gentle cooking in an uncovered vessel will evaporate the liquid until the tomatoes will be the proper consistency without thickening. Violent heat destroys the delicious flavor of this half fruit, half vegetable, so when you cook them be most careful to use only moderate heat.

PEAR MARMALADE.—Weigh, pare, halve, and core as many ripe mellow pears as you desire to use. Put them into a preserving pan, cover them with water, and simmer gently until they are tender. Lift them out of the water and boil the liquid for an hour with the skins and cores of the pears. Strain it. Make a syrup of it by boiling a pound and a half of sugar for every two pounds of fruit. Let this syrup boil until it will stiffen when a small quantity is poured upon a plate. Stir the pears into the syrup and boil all together for a few minutes. Turn the marmalade into jars, cover in the usual way and store in a cool, dry place. This is an English recipe.