

MICHIGAN FARMER

AND STATE JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE.

DETROIT, DEC. 26, 1891.

THE HOUSEHOLD---Supplement.

Merry Christmas

— AND —
HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL THE
HOUSEHOLDERS.

THE DIFFERENCE.

Grandmother doted, when she was a girl,
On back-stitch and hem-stitch and cross-stitch
and pearl,
Was taught in her teens, by her own careful
mother,
To make the fine shirts for her father and
brother.
Blithely she sung over distaff and reel,
And merrily tripped back and forth at her wheel.
Grandmother's granddaughter runs a machine,
Paints like a Titian on panel and screen,
Runs over to Paris to buy a new dress,
And lectures and doctors and writes for the
press.
Little she knows about distaff and reel,
But dotes—oh! so fondly—on grandmother's
wheel;
She decks every spoke with a beautiful bow,
And then sets it up in the parlor to show.
Patient and firm, through her youth and her
prime,
With precept on precept and line upon line,
Her hands full of work and her head full of
cares,
Grandmother managed her household affairs—
Her closets and presses by prudent forethought
Filled with the work by her deft fingers wrought,
She married her husband for better or worse,
And in her whole life never thought of divorce.
From club to committee, from concert to play,
Grandmother's granddaughter hurries away,
To her church and her charities, culture and art,
She gives much of her time and a deal of her
heart.
Her world is so busy, her work is so wide,
She can spare time and thought for little beside,
Nor pauses to think in the hurry and strife
Of the peace and contentment of grandmother's
life.

—Vivily Corwin.

A PROTEST.

"It is delightful to be a woman," says
Olive Schreiner in "The Story of an
African Farm," "but every man thanks
the Lord devoutly that he isn't one!"
And well may a man rejoice and give
thanks that he is a man, if for no other
reason than this—that he has not to
endure the advice and counsel that is
poured in mighty torrents upon women.
"Do," "Don't," "Never," "Always"
—so runs the refrain. The sea has its
ebb and flow, but the tide of advice to

women is ever at the flood and always
slopping over. When a man has nothing
else to do he sits down and writes
out what he thinks women ought to do;
even our sisters turn upon us and—ad-
vise. Sometimes we get so tired of it
we wish they would "rend us." Even
the little thing in pinafores learns her
lesson of "must" and "mustn't," and
all along from the cradle to the grave
is taught her life's great lesson, how to
be pleasing and attractive and comple-
mentary to man. When he finds us
creatures of such wonderful tutoring in
manners, beliefs and precedents, what
wonder he thinks it must be delightful
to be a woman—and is glad he was born
a man!

A few years ago mental culture was
the fad, and the harp of a thousand
strings which voices woman's duties
was keyed to intellectual advancement.
The Chautauqua idea was epidemic; we
studied our text books and dug into the
roots of things and crammed a vast deal
of general information in praiseworthy
efforts at self-improvement; we talked
on every topic from Browning to Bla-
vatsky without realizing how really
little we knew, how superficial our at-
tainments. All the advisers said women
ought to know more and we set about
knowing more at once. But even here
was "the multitude of counselors" in
whom, alas, we didn't find safety, for
the most versatile woman who ever
wore a bonnet could not take it all in,
and whichever way she turned, some-
body said the other way was a good
deal better. Some said Do learn all
about Egypt and what that charming
Miss Edwards says about the Pharaohs;
others said Don't mind about mummies
but study Charlemagne and his times;
Always learn your own history first, says
another; and as the last straw, Never
mind history, but study literature, a
theme capable of infinite and distract-
ing subdivisions, each one of which
somebody considers of prime importance
to every well regulated woman. What
poor head could hold it all!

Then came a great wave of hygiene
in which the doctors politely but
emphatically contradicted each other
and sometimes themselves. Once we
were all eating oatmeal because it was
good for Scotchmen and horses; we
munched graham bread and tried dry
bran for dyspepsia; then we encounter-

ed the "Don'ts" and learned that the
things which we had been taught were
beneficial were really deleterious and
pernicious. Who was right?

Then came physical culture, and Dos
and Don'ts were fired at us all along the
line of muscular development; we
should exercise thus—and thus—and
not that way but some other way, bet-
ter as it seems to us simply because it
is a trifle different, but all alike in the
imperative as essential to our well
being. Out of this grew the gospel of
grace and beauty according to Delsarte
and his imitators; and now the advice
is on the line of making the most of our
physical charms. We must rub out
our wrinkles with great weariness to
the flesh; we must develop hollow
cheeks by massage; we must steam our
faces over herb teas till they are par-
boiled to improve our complexions or
walk miles on foggy days, as one writer
advises, for the same laudable purpose.
Then a treatise on the care of clothing
would keep us stuffing dress sleeves to
keep them in shape and rolling bonnet
strings in silver paper "the whole en-
during day." And another set of ad-
visers would have us conquer men's
vices and hold our husbands' affections
with breaded chops and tomato sauce—
and so *ad infinitum*.

How wearying it all is! How tire-
some the iteration! How meaningless
to most of us, who have to do as we can,
not as we would, and are painfully
aware of our short-comings! What
busy woman for whom the days are all
too short can spend an hour a day
rubbing and steaming her face, fifteen
minutes manicuring her nails and half
an hour brushing her hair! How long
could she stand at the glass, bending,
swaying, curving her figure to make it
lithe and graceful? Would she think
the game worth the candle if she could,
since the avowed object of all these
practices is to gratify "the lust of the
eye" and appeal to man's senses? If
she has not a more noble object in view,
doesn't a woman put herself on a par
with the Oriental girl whose parents
groom her and dress her and wait upon
her, hoping that it may her good for-
tune to be, by virtue of her good looks,
an odalisque in a harem?

It is so easy to advise, especially along
the line of our individual preferences
and according to our ideas of what is

necessary to ourselves. Does any one believe Frances Willard, wise and good as she is, would advise women to wear dresses reaching only to the ankles if she herself wore a number seven shoe? Or would she have said corsets have filled more graves than whiskey if she weighed one hundred and eighty pounds? Just so all our advice is shaped by what we find circumstances or inclination or expediency urging upon us individually. But ought we to obtrude so much? Do this, Don't do that, upon those whose surroundings, tastes and environments radically differ? How wise we are when we calmly direct our ways in the light of our own judgment of what is right for us to do, and pay little or no heed to the platitudes of those who write for the edification of others without a thought of practicing their own preachments!

And how does it happen that all this wisdom is directed towards the conduct and culture of women, and never by any chance includes her brothers? I never saw advice about training a mustache or eliminating crows-feet around masculine eyes in print. Nobody tells men how to stand, and walk, and crook their elbows—but sometimes when I see a man shambling along, chin poked out, shoulders hunched up, one in advance of the other as if he wanted to introduce himself in profile, I really wish a little of the advice so voluminously bestowed upon women might be directed where there seems to be an open field for it.

BEATRIX.

TABLE DECORATIONS.

Have something, if it is a bunch of dandelions or daisies. Plant morning-glories, if for no other reason than to put the lovely blossoms on the breakfast table. Nature must have made them for that purpose, as they only last through the early morning. I saw a vase of blue larkspur at one end of the dining table, and those lovely newly made over Helianthus, their vivid yellow and very double flowers making a striking contrast to the vivid blue at the other end of the table. Some lively girls found, late in the fall, a curiously shaped beet. It was nearly as large as a peck measure, and shaped like a basket. They washed and scrubbed the sides, bringing out a rich red color, and fastening strings to it, hung it over the table. And a pretty, quaint hanging basket it was, and callers asked where they bought such a curious table ornament.

The wizard Edison has it in his power to invent curious table decorations. At a dinner given by him in his house, the flowers above the table looked as if suspended in the air, and later the lovely things fell down over the guests' heads and on the table in a brilliant shower. The secret of it was every flower had a bit of iron attached, and they were held in place by a con-

cealed magnet, until the wizard was ready to turn the magnet around, and have the lovely blossoms fall on the heads of his astonished guests. We can't all be Edisons, but with a little ingenuity we can have something pretty on the table all the year round. The plants, or flowers, remove stiffness and give bashful folks something to talk about.

On Woodward Avenue, Detroit, there is a phonograph parlor; and Sister Gracious, having heard of this wonderful invention, went in to see what it was like. There were a dozen harmless looking boxes ranged around the room, and a gentlemanly young man in attendance. She told him that she was hard of hearing, and please to turn on his strongest machine. He turned to one, and after seeing that Sister Gracious' nickel was deposited in the slot, gave her the ear tubes. There was not a suspicion of a smile on the young man's face, and Sister Gracious composed herself to hear a heavenly orchestral strain, or a sweet hymn. But an awful voice yelled "Fire!!" and in consternation she was about to drop the tubes and rush out of the building, but remembering the five cents, she was bound to get her money's worth. Then she heard the steam engines come tearing up and the calls through the trumpet, and the sizz of the water on the fire, and all the while the awful voice was yelling "Fire!" and then complete silence. With a dazed expression she put down the tubes, and the bland young man asked her if she could "hear anything." She replied with freezing dignity that "she could." Then he offered another set of tubes, probably wishing his visitor to depart in peace, and then she heard the delicious strains of the orchestra. Truly this is a marvelous thing. What will it lead to?

SISTER GRACIOUS.

DETROIT.

A VISIT TO LIBBY PRISON.

One of Chicago's great attractions is the old Libby prison, removed from Richmond, Va., in 1889 and opened as a war museum in September of the same year. It is a brick building, three stories high at the front and four stories in the rear besides basement and attic, the front measuring 132 feet with a depth of 110 feet, and, as it now stands, it does not vary an inch from the original proportions; for every board, beam, timber and block of stone was marked before its removal and occupies the same position in the building as when those rooms sheltered the more than 40,000 Union men as prisoners. And the thought was ever with us, if these walls could tell of the scenes they had witnessed, what a thrilling story it would be.

As it now stands it is surrounded by a massive and ornamental stone wall, the front looking like a fine building.

Passing through the large doors in the outer wall, where the 50 cent admission ticket is surrendered, we found ourselves in a large open enclosure surrounding the prison, and here the larger relics have been placed. There is a line of heavy cannon along the front of the terrace, with specimens of shot and shell. A section of a water battery used on the Potomac river during the war was of great interest as proving the force of the projectiles fired from one mile away; a solid iron shot weighing 250 pounds, and a conical steel shot have both penetrated the five iron plates each one inch in thickness, but both are still imbedded therein. Large torpedoes, a Confederate brass cannon and, as a special exhibit, a section of the greatest iron chain ever made, being four times the size of any manufactured to-day. It is hand forged, each link weighing 150 pounds. This was stretched across the Hudson in 1776 to prevent the British vessels from going up the river. There is also in this enclosure a most interesting relic of the Chicago fire, found when the excavations were being made for the twenty-two story Masonic temple during the present year. It is from the ruins of a hardware store and is a solid mass of molten iron, copper and brass.

We passed through the same door that opened to admit all those prisoners; and we thought it might have been appropriately labeled: "Who enters here leaves Hope behind."

The reception room was where all the prisoners were examined and assigned to their places in the building, and here all are asked to register, with a separate book for the old soldiers; and one sees at a glance that days and even weeks would be required to carefully examine all the relics here collected, the constant wonder being how they could collect so many thousands in two years' time; as it is claimed that this is the most complete Confederate collection in existence. All the varieties of shot, shell, guns and instruments of warfare, curious relics, original manuscripts, letters and papers, flags of every kind, the bullet-riddled, blood-stained ones that prove their own genuineness and the brilliantly spangled banners presented for display; also the stars and bars curiously wrought with paper roses by the Richmond ladies for some occasion of jubilee. Near the door stands the marble top table on which Generals Grant and Lee drew up the papers for the surrender of the Confederacy. There are hundreds of paintings of generals and others made famous by the war, official documents, photographs, battle orders and all kinds of Confederate and Union publications, Confederate money enough to make millionaires of all the managers if it had any value, with specimens of all their poor make-shifts of clothing, shoes, etc., used during the years that they were cut off from Yankee manufactures; sections of many trees in

which shot and shell are embedded and the bricks on which those starving, homesick men cut their names or those of their loved ones.

General McDonald was there to explain all about the tunnel that he helped to excavate, slanting in a fire place in the first story and through which 109 Union officers escaped, himself among the number, showing the chisel with which the work was done. Then there were the relics, bulletins and so many reminders all through the times of the assassination of Presidents Lincoln and Garfield, as well as the gallant Colonel Ellsworth, John Brown and all the rest. The long lines of show-cases in every room were filled with things of such great interest that one must live those times all over again in viewing them; one being filled with those well remembered specimens of stationery with their flag and star, and red and blue ornamentation, also the papers *The Old Flag*, *The Haversack* and many, many more.

There are views of Andersonville where, when the prisoners were suffering for water, the wonderful "Providence spring" of purest article broke out beneath a certain stump; we had heard it all but here we saw the stump, carefully covered with wire netting to preserve it from vandal hands. We explored the cellars, "Rat Hell" and "Black Hole," where prisoners were confined on the damp earth without a ray of light, and then away in the garret we found many curious things that did not belong to the war, but some that had been already received for the Columbian Exposition, a peculiarly constructed rude Mexican cart, built before they had any knowledge of making wheels round by the use of spokes, and there were all the curious things provided by government for the Arctic explorations, and many of the native utensils used in all climates.

One of the special exhibits that is also in waiting for the World's Fair is an old portrait of Christopher Columbus painted by Sir Antonio Moro, and the quaintly carved, gilded frame is also a curiosity. The work was done for one of the royal family of Spain, but was brought to England in 1590, and is now owned by a Chicago millionaire. Electric lights burn before it day and night, and it is considered a genuine work of art.

In going about the building we often noticed brass plates, about two by six inches in size, screwed to the floor and containing a single name. Upon inquiry we learned that these marked the places where men slept when prisoners there, and in their recent visits they had designated the spot.

My letter is long and I have conveyed but a faint idea of all the curiosities that await the visitor, for surely no one could fail in being interested in what the building contains. The old windows and doors are the same, in fact, everything but the floors, and these

have been simply covered with another layer of flooring, where the "tramp, tramp, tramp" of many weary feet had worn them away.

ROMEO.

EL. SEE.

PRODIGALS.

The minister preached on the parable of the prodigal son the other evening. Of course his sermon was along the old lines. He told us what a naughty boy the prodigal had been, and instanced wine, women, horse racing (I dare say he meant chariot races), as probable causes of the quick dispersion of his inheritance. Then he told us what a loving, tender parent the prodigal had, and pictured the return, after he had exhausted his appetite for vice and reached the lowest depths of poverty and disgrace, in very pathetic terms, so that sundry tender-hearted ones were forced to surreptitious use of pocket-handkerchiefs.

But I confess to a little sympathy for the elder brother, for whom the minister hadn't a good word, calling him selfish, unfeeling, jealous, without fraternal affection, because he was not wildly hilarious at the home-coming of the family black sheep. I don't suppose the elder brother cared so much about one calf out of the herd, or even for the gold ring and the purple robe, as he did for other things, less palpable. I admit the beauty of the father's free, generous forgiveness, typical of the gracious pardon our Heavenly Father will extend to all those who will truly repent; and will allow that the prodigal bowed his pride and sued for forgiveness—after he found he really couldn't stand a husk diet any longer. It was not until he had exhausted himself and his substance in vice, and was reduced to the lowest depths of poverty that he thought of home and his father, and even then, it was the good dinners he remembered first. To my mind, the prodigal is not a fine character. I'm afraid I do not even appreciate his repentance.

There are a great many prodigals in the world, with fathers and elder brothers to carry out the simile. And when you take from the parable its spiritual significance (for it was meant to teach us how ready is our Father in Heaven to forgive us if we will but ask Him), my sympathy for that elder one of the household still continues as earnest. The story is true in too many families. One member, perhaps because not well brought up in youth, the child of weakly indulgent parents, or inherently vicious, leaves home to become a wanderer. Then "absence makes the heart grow fonder," and though his name be seldom spoken, thought is constantly with him, wondering where and in what state of life he may be. And when he comes home, if he ever does, he is moderately sure

of the largest slice of the domestic veal. He may have plunged into the wildest excesses, dragged an honorable name in the dirt, and be driven back at last, not because of love for those left behind or a wish for a better life, but simply because he has spent all he had and has no other refuge. Necessity, not inclination, compels him to relinquish the fast life he has led; give him a thousand dollars and he would return to his old ways while the money lasted. But he is made welcome just the same. Many a prodigal comes back to the farm home under such circumstances and endures its quiet and peace till rehabilitated in health; then he "strikes the old man," as he will phrase it, for money on plea of meaning to make a new start, and is off again. I've always wished I knew whether the prodigal in the parable stayed reformed. Without doubt there were "reformed men" of that stamp when Christ preached in Galilee.

Now it is very wise and prudent in the prodigal to return home and implore forgiveness for his waywardness; and no doubt his repentance is often heartfelt and sincere. And it is beautiful, in both fact and theory, that his father shall be ready to accord the pardon he entreats, even to the extent of meeting him "a great way off." But I don't think that, in simple justice, the elder brother ought to be called names if he sees the return in a more practical and less sentimental light. The prodigal took his share of the farm or the bank-stock—perhaps necessitating a mortgage on the former to enable him to get it—and promptly went off and made ducks-and-drakes of it. He had a good time while it lasted; tasted all the world's pleasures along with its vices, and wasted in wanton indulgence the fruits of years of toil and saving. In the meanwhile, the elder brother set himself at work to pay off the mortgage and clear the farm. It meant toil, economy, self-denial. While others feasted, he labored; he wore butternut overalls instead of purple robes; he missed lots of good times because he had in mind a worthy purpose. He was by all odds the best citizen; he was a tax-payer, and his credit was good. Perhaps people called him dull and slow because he was good—it is often so. He fought and conquered inclinations akin to those of his brother; he had as keen a liking for the pleasures of the world, but his study was to subdue rather than indulge it.

And when he sees that wayward youth returning bankrupt, dirty, disreputable, literally forced home because he is at the end of his rope and has no place else to go, and finds him received as an honored guest, treated to chicken pie and strawberry marmalade; and realizes that he is to be a charge on the family, to be fed and clothed and set on his feet again out of his (the elder brother's) hard won

earnings, out of his share of the inheritance, don't you think the senior is at least excusable if at first he doesn't appreciate the beauty of the forgiveness which is so liberal with what is really and rightly his?

The prodigal son, out of the parable and in real life, often returns to a home impoverished by his extravagance or folly; comes to share the earnings and savings of those who have worked while he played; sometimes where it is hard work to find food and clothes for those who have not abused a parent's bounty, and where his presence means still greater pinching and self denial. Now I don't say he should not be forgiven and welcomed and helped. We have to deal with him as we do with tramps (who are somebody's else prodigals). We had rather feed a dozen undeserving ones than send away one who really needs help. But I think he is not entitled to roast veal; his just deserts only entitle him to a slice of salt pork; in other words, there's no need of making a hero of him because he came home when he could not help it. And if his elder brothers and sisters can be glad to see him and are willing to share with him again, that's very sweet and beautiful and Christian, but if any stubborn elder brother feels the family rejoicings are somewhat disproportionate to the occasion, I say 'tis but human and natural and we ought not to blame him.

BRUNEFILLE.

"DOING THE DISHES."

A New York paper says that a boy fifteen years old washes all the dishes at the Dairy Kitchen in that city in a machine, by which 3,600 pieces can be washed in two hours, with no damage by breaking or chipping. The machine is thus described:

"It is nothing more or less than a long tank divided into four compartments, like set tubs, only larger. Overhead is a pulley arrangement, suspended from a small trolley track. A big wire basket packed full of dishes is hung from above and doused up and down in the first tub, which is filled with boiling water, so strong with soap that nobody's hands could endure it. Then the boy lifts the basket out by the pulley, and lowers it into the second tub, which likewise is filled with boiling hot soap suds. The basket is allowed to rest on the bottom of this tub two or three minutes to soak off sticky substances, like egg. The third tub contains rinsing water, and so does the fourth. In each of these the basket of dishes reposes a minute or two. Then it is hoisted out and girls whose hands are clad in cotton gloves take the dishes out and lay them on the sorting table. They are so hot that not a particle of moisture remains after a few seconds, and other girls carry

them away. The whole process has taken perhaps six or seven minutes. Each wire basket holds a large number of dishes.

"The last tub through which the dishes pass receives the first water. The water flows from this to the next, and so on, and is heated from coils of steam pipes in the bottom of the two rinsing tubs. The dishes are cleaner than ever before—in fact, they are perfectly clean. The girls get through their work much earlier, and the proprietors are saved enormous bills for broken crockery."

The day may come when every well regulated kitchen will have its tank for dishwashing, as much a household necessity as the range, and when that time comes—and when women have pockets once more—the female millennium is close at hand.

But it has just occurred to me—I really wonder I never thought of it before—that girls would not hate dishwashing so much if they had pretty dishes to handle, plenty of nice clean white towels for wiping, and a real bona-fida dish-cloth instead of a rag to wash them with. Then, given a good big dish-pan and a tray to turn them on, and some one to see there's plenty of water and that it's hot—why it isn't so bad after all. I've known girls tease to wipe the "rose-bud china" after company tea, when they developed a remarkable facility in slipping out of sight with a sunbonnet before any one could say "dishes" on ordinary occasions.

Pretty dishes are cheap just now, and in these days when an odd plate on the table is not a family disgrace, it is not a fracture of the whole Decalogue to break a saucer or a plate. There is no excuse for farmers using ironstone ware—handle-less cups so thick you can hardly get your lips over them, and steel cutlery that needs scouring after every meal; no wonder the girls revolt at that. If you want them to be deft of touch, nimble-fingered, and above all wish to inculcate careful habits, don't get things they can throw round without damage. Most girls can be taught to enjoy and take care of pretty and dainty things; a love for them is instinctive in the sex. If you have one pretty cup and saucer, one delicate china plate, slam-bang may go your common ware, pell-mell into and out of the pan, but the fragility of that one rare bit will be recognized and it will be handled accordingly. And the women who "slat things round" are those who were made acquainted with things that could be "slatted" when they were young. How foreign to our ideas of what is refined and becoming in woman is she who bangs the chairs against the wall, slams the dishes on the table, and does everything with a bounce, whose way through the house you can mark by the noise she makes!

B.

REMOVING MILDEW.

A correspondent recently asked what would remove mildew from cotton cloth. The Editor, some years ago, had a white pique dress which through carelessness became very badly mildewed. Bleaching, even soaking in buttermilk, was entirely ineffectual and it was not until the dress was put into a weak solution of chloride of lime that the obnoxious stains disappeared. But chloride must be used very carefully, as if it is too strong it will make the goods positively rotten. And every trace of it must be removed by copious rinsings. An exchange advises the use of this mixture: "One pint of soft soap; half pint of water; teacupful of salt. Beat this together until thoroughly mixed, then rub and squeeze the compound into the fibers of the cloth, and spread upon the goods any that remains. Place the article on the grass in the sun, and with a sprinkler keep it quite damp until all traces of mildew have disappeared. Do not water too freely, as this would wash the preparation out of the fabric before it could remove the stains. In very obstinate cases it may be necessary to take up the article, wash it, and make a second application. While it is better to apply the bleaching preparation at once, it has been found efficacious in stains of long standing, even when the article has been washed repeatedly." Common salt is known as chloride of sodium, and the principal bleaching agent in this compound is without doubt the chlorine of the salt. Try this; it is cheap and quite safe.

Contributed Recipes.

BAKING POWDER.—Three ounces of tartaric acid; four ounces of soda; one pint of flour. Mix and sift five or six times. I have used this several years. Try it, ladies.

ADRIAN.

A. A. L.

MARBLE CAKE.—Dark part. One cup of brown sugar; half cup of molasses; half cup of butter; half cup of sour milk; yolks of four eggs; half a nutmeg; teaspoonful of cinnamon; half teaspoonful of cloves; half teaspoonful of soda; flour. White part. Two cups of white sugar; whites of four eggs; half cup of butter; half cup of sour milk; two teaspoonfuls of cream tartar; one teaspoonful of soda. Sift the cream tartar into two cups of flour. This makes two cakes.

CLARKSVILLE.

I. E.

COOKIES WITHOUT EGGS.—Stir to a cream two cups of butter, add two cups of white sugar, one of sweet milk, and flavor with a little grated nutmeg and a pinch of ground cinnamon. Into five cups of sifted flour thoroughly mix three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, add to the other ingredients, and turn out on your board. Roll as thin as possible. Strew white sugar over the surface, and then pass the roller lightly over it, just once. Bake a pale brown in shallow tins.

E. M. J.