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THE HOUSEHOLD---Supplement.

RAPID TRANSIT.

The first train leaves at six p. m.
For the land where the poppy blows;
The mother dear is the engineer,
And the passenger laughs and crows.

The palace car is the mother's arms,
The whistle, a low, sweet strain;
The passenger winks and nods and blinks
And goes to sleep in the train.

At eight p. m. the next train starts
To the poppy land afar,
The summons clear falls on the ear,
"All aboard for the sleeping car."

But what is the fare to poppy land?
I hope it is not too dear,
The fare is this, a hug and a kiss,
And it's paid to the engineer.

So I ask of Him who children took
On His knees in kindness great,
"Take charge, I pray, of the train each day,
That leaves at six and eight."

"Keep watch of the passengers, thus I pray,
For to me they are very dear,
And special ward, O gracious Lord,
O'er the gentle engineer."
—Edgar Wade Abbott.

LITERATURE IN DISTRICT SCHOOLS.

Every district school teacher having the intelligence and purity of his administration at heart, is at once sensible of the possible power to this end of proper literature, and of the utter dearth of literature of the required class, both in the homes and in the school of his district. Therefore, if he be at all spirited in the matter, he sets about an effort to form a club among his pupils for some one of the many excellent youths' and children's papers or magazines now published at a price that brings the very best within the reach, I had almost said of the very poorest, and I will say no less, for there is no family in any country place of which I am informed, so poor that they would not be richer in more ways than one at the end of a year by having at its outset paid \$1.75 for a year's number of the *Youth's Companion*, and what is thus true of this is equally true of several others. But what success has our philanthropic teacher? Two, three, four or five subscribers at the outside, and they invariably from the families best supplied with wholesome literature. The excuses made are flimsy and pitiful enough, and no amount of presenting the question in its true light will induce these close-fisted brain starvers, body-breaking mind crampers, to invest

a dollar in any such "nonsense for their young ones." It is all they "can do to get school books for 'em. Let 'em study and learn the books they've got!" And the teacher is disheartened and discouraged that they who *should* care most, really care not at all for that culture and mind growth so necessary, but which is not attainable through the unaided channel of mere text books, as commonly handled in common schools, or indeed in any school.

But he reflects, "Unless I can in a measure at least lower this mountain and raise up this valley, my work will be in a great measure a failure." And so out of his own resources and by dint of manipulations worthy of a political wire-puller he secures a showing of good literature to place in the hands and before the minds of his pupils.

But all this should be changed. Our State apportions a library fund, very unjustly, too, inasmuch as only those districts having an enrollment of 200 pupils or over are entitled to a share of it. Now, this is radically wrong, and runs counter to the spirit and temper of our institutions. The child whose name stands enrolled in the district where only a half dozen pupils are found is just as much entitled to, and generally much more in need of, his share of this library fund than the child who is "one" of the 200 or over, from the very fact that the latter may readily have access to other libraries and to various means of general information which the isolated child knows nothing of.

It is high time that districts take up this "war cry" and demand their rights, and when once they are obtained let it be made a crime punishable by heavy fine for any officer or set of officers to use this money for any other than library purposes. Also let the buying of any but wholesome literature be a finable offence. Let a large percentage of the wishy-washy trash that goes to make up the average Sunday school library be tabooed. Give the children something real, earnest, honest, true, funny, witty, wise, historical, biographical, travels, books of nature, oh, there is a world of healthful literature calculated to develop by well directed gymnastics the mental muscle and nerve fibre of the growing mind, and there is a strong effort on foot to secure for the children in the common schools their share of it,

whether the natural guardians and protectors see the need of these things or not. Let some live, intelligent, go-ahead woman in every school district in our fair State set the library ball rolling in behalf of her own school and neighborhood.

The Y. P. R. C. form a good nucleus for a library, and may be purchased for \$3.75, eight volumes that children, young and old, literally devour, and grow mentally and morally healthier and stronger every day. E. L. NYE.

THAT SCHOOL PROBLEM.

As E. C. has opened a new subject, I will just make a few remarks before it is dropped. It seems to me there is a great deal of truth in her argument, although I know all teachers do not think as she does for in my family of brothers and sisters there are six teachers and I have heard nearly all express their opinions upon the subject, and they are very different from hers. They say parents do not visit the schools as much as they ought, and that if they would visit more and take more interest in them and the progress of their children it would be an incentive to teachers to take more interest.

The first term our little boy went to school his teacher came home with him one night, from school, stayed all night, and went to school with him next day. As she took her leave she urged me to come to school some day; said she always liked to have the parents visit her school; it seemed as if they cared something about how the school was conducted, and did not think it was just a place to send the children to get rid of them for the day. So I went one morning and stayed all day. She seemed pleased to have me come and I enjoyed the visit, and thought that schools had improved very much since I went to school some eighteen or twenty years before. Now here is a question: Did she ask me to come because she wished it, or did she act a part, and much prefer I had stayed at home? I declare I almost wish I had not gone now since E. C. has let us "in it." That same teacher has given up teaching and has gone to Chicago to take a full course in nursing and caring for sick people, perhaps she was driven (by visitors) from the school-room; she was a good teacher

and liked teaching, but nurses can tell visitors that their patients are not well enough to admit them and no one would take offense. But I really do think that visitors in the school-room break the usual order of the school, as the dull ones are embarrassed, the restless made more restless, and the curious are more so than common and are reprimanded by the teacher, so perhaps the bright ones only are not disturbed.

A. G. S. is to be pitied, but still her trouble is as nothing compared to Mrs. A. Do's; that is to be taken to heart, indeed. At the same time it would be harder for A. G. S. to care for her husband's brother, for there is not the tender feeling for him there is for a little helpless child, especially her own. She should be so thankful that her own dear ones are not thus afflicted and try to bear it with a patient spirit, for "If ye have done it unto the least of these ye have done it unto me."

To be thought to be perfectly happy and contented in my home has helped me to stand this cold weather in our little, cold house; and try to stow away the foot wear—a half dozen pairs to each one of a family of five. If we were to put up shelves to set them on it would make our dwelling look like a boot and shoe store. But I try to be contented while waiting for the new house.

Do any of the HOUSEHOLDERS try sprinkling light snow on the carpets, sweeping it around and taking up before it melts? I think it a nice way to take up the dust and brighten the carpet.

BUSY BEE.

HASTINGS.

THEOPOLUS AND HIS TRIALS.

The thermometer at our house—on the outside—has been way down below zero and southwest breezes blew but brought no balm, for still the question as to who or which shall build the morning fires remains unsettled, but I feel so grateful to those members of the HOUSEHOLD who have taken a right view (my view) of this question. Little Nan, especially, receives my intensest gratitude for saying right out "Let the husband build them if he wants to." That'll do.

A. L. L. started on the right track when she followed Scripture and asked her husband for information regarding certain domestic questions and problems, but switched into the wrong track, when she ceased to advise with him and offered such woefully unsafe advice as "Let the wife decide who shall build the fires." 'T'wont do—like "Samantha," I *dasn't*.

Bess is right in advising "Let the husband lie in bed and sleep, instead of growling around the kitchen." Yes, the morning is such a good time to sleep (while the breakfast is cooking) and the growling can be done later on.

There are several other questions that are bothering me some, viz.: "Is

it right for the wife to rouse her husband from his evening reverie, and make 'swifts' of him when she wants to wind a skein of yarn to complete her fascinator?" And while holding the yarn on my aching arms I thought of the days ago, when my "fascinator" wore curls (instead of a wad) and was no "yarn affair" either, but the question will present itself,—at times—(fire building times), Have I really, after all, been "wooled" by my fascinator? (Oh dear! how I do dread those fires—before they're built).

But wife says I make good swifts—slow swifts—and the next thing I expect she'll be using me for tongs to fix the fire with, and between the fear of this and the dread of building the morning fires, I'm suffering ever so much.

Another thing: How long ought it to take to iron a dress—just an every day blue dress? You see, I asked wife to take a ride in the cutter with me. She said "Yes, just as soon as I finish ironing this dress." So of course I waited, and she "went for" that dress with four flat-irons, and punched it, pulled it, spat it, ironed it, lengthwise, crosswise, cornerwise, and all ways. I surely began to fear that she would iron it *always*. And I saw, while waiting, why "woman's work is never done."

And now about buttons: When I was a boy, the buttons were always put on my shirt in a nice, straight row, down the front side. In a few years fashion said the buttons must be put up and down the back, and I learned to go around there to button up the garment. I'd just got used to that arrangement so I could button my shirt without spoiling my countenance, when fashion took another flop, and the buttons came up on the shoulder, almost necessitating my getting "up on my ear" when those button are to be placed, and now my wife has got a new kink on the buttoning business. If I break my back buttoning my shirt, who'll be to blame? That's what I want to know!

One more: The present style adopted by the ladies of "doing" their "back hair"—it grieves me sore—in a little wad without beauty or adornment; nothing but hair, and, in many cases, very little of that, right on the back end of the head and it looks so lonely and friendless. Can't a style be adopted that may justly lay claim to somewhat of fitness rather than a claim to "fits" or fashion?

THEOPOLUS.

A BLACKBIRD PIE.

There is always a call for anything new and novel that will draw a crowd and charm the silver out of close-buttoned pockets in aid of charity or church work. The *Boston Globe* recently described a rather taking departure from old lines in this direction, framed on one of Mother Goose's melodies. First four or five large "pies" were prepared, made in large tin dish pans with brown

paper "crust." The inside of the pies was filled with trifling gifts nicely wrapped in tinted tissue paper and tied with baby ribbon, leaving on each a long end to pass through the brown paper crust. "Four and twenty blackbirds" were four and twenty little girls dressed in black paper muslin Mother Hubbards with big sashes of coarse black tarleton caught up like wings to the shoulders, long black stockings, and black caps with a tiny twist of red. These "blackbirds" sold "a piece of pie" for twenty-five cents. When all were sold the purchasers gathered round the pie and each secured a ribbon end. The children, joining hands around the pie and its buyers, marched singing

"Sing a song o' sixpence
Pocket full of rye,
Four and twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie."

and all the rest of it, and at the words "nipped off her nose" the paper top was broken open and the gifts drawn out by the ribbons. The entertainment was very successful.

SARATOGA CHIPS.

Everybody has heard of Saratoga chips and almost everybody has tried the hard, dry, tasteless, salty things, and like olives, made believe very hard at being fond of them. The keeper of a fashionable resort at Saratoga, N. Y., originated them and it became "the proper thing" to eat and praise. They are manufactured by the barrel, and sold at a low price, but if you wish to make your own, the *New York Tribune* tells how to do it. A quantity can be made and kept on hand for use:

Cut the potatoes first in the thinnest possible slices with a vegetable slicer and soak for at least six hours to draw the starch out of them. These two things are essential to success. When you are ready to fry them, drain them out of the water and use a cloth to absorb all moisture. Have a large pot of fat—at least three quarts—over the fire, heated very hot. It must be hotter for this purpose than for any other frying done by the cook, unless it be for potato croquettes. Do not attempt to fry more than a pint of sliced potatoes at once. If more are put in they cool the fat too much to cook them properly. The kettle containing the fat should be rather deep, otherwise it is liable to boil over when the potatoes are first put in. There is at that time a violent ebullition in the fat, caused by the moisture in the potatoes. The moment this boiling ceases, in about two minutes, lift the kettle on top of the stove, where it is not so hot, and let the potatoes fry for five or six minutes longer.

They should be crisp and a yellowish white, but not brown. Drain them out of the fat as soon as they are done, on to brown paper, to absorb all grease. Dredge them with salt, and serve them on a hot platter

SOME PECULIAR CALIFORNIAN PRODUCTIONS.

It is a year ago to-day, Jan 27th., since I first came into the beautiful City of the Angels. We never visit a place but once, because our consciousness of it is never twice alike. I have tried to see and feel again as I did when I first knew the lovely days of January in this summer land, but they are always as a dream picture. The deep, pure sky and the brilliant sunshine have never seemed as marvellous; the roses and purple heliotrope have never touched me as they did a year ago to-day when a friend gathered me a bouquet of them on the lawn. And I do not wish it. I rejoice in the infinity of life. I love the earth-beauty here better to-day than a year ago, because I have lived here and know it is the common, every day blessing and bounty of nature. It is the peaceful way between extremes. In the east it is bitterly cold, many are suffering from cold and hunger. Here none freeze or starve.

In looking over a letter written here a year ago, I find this statement of a fact surprising to me then: "Roses are in bloom—great rose-trees here big around as a broom-stick and bigger!" I have since ceased to wonder at rose-trees ten inches in diameter, and have often seen them climbing over the porches of the houses, sometimes even on the roof to the chimney. Why should they not be large when every day in the year is a growing day? As many as three hundred varieties are found in a single garden where the owner loves and cultivates the rose.

Some varieties are not fragrant, but none is sweeter than the California rose. A French perfumer has tested these roses and found that they contain twenty per cent. more of the volatile oil than those of the French rose-gardens. This means in time a new industry for California. English violets grew profusely here. It is now decreed that no flowers may be worn but violets. Often on the street cars a lady wearing a bunch of these radiates the sweet odor like a sphere of bloom. The ideal becomes the real here. What could be more delightful than in mid-winter to sit upon the sunny porch, looking afar over heavenly hills and valleys, breathing the perfumed air wafted off a bank of violets, and dreaming the heart away into the distant mountain-zone and wondrous tinted cloud-world? It is not vain to dream, for

"Dreams are but the light of clearer skies
Too dazzling for our naked eyes,
And when we catch their flashing beams
We turn aside and call them dreams.
Oh! trust me, every thought that yet
In greatness rose or sorrow set,
That time to ripening glory nursed
Was called an 'idle dream' at first."

Among local affairs one has to investigate the tamale. Early in my stay here a friend spoke of them as something peculiar in the eatable line and that he liked them. One sees every

evening the carts on the streets, "Mexican and Texas Tamales."

One evening I was out so late the dining-room at the hotel was closed on my return. I concluded that must be the occasion for the tamale, went down, and finding one of the carts near asked the man if I could carry away one of those things he had for sale. "Yes," he said, and flepped up a cover and fished out a queer-looking, steaming article, rolled it in paper and with it I proceeded to the hotel to unravel the tamale. It was rather a suspicious-looking bundle, hot, soft, and wet. I commenced by untying the strings of corn-husks around the ends; three little bundles were done up in husks separately, then all three together in an outer husk covering. Unrolling all the husks, the substance of the tamale is reached, a layer of corn-meal containing within it some hashed beef all warm with pepper. "Quite an institution" for five cents, the boys say. To be more dignified, the tamale is *mulum in parvo*. I have not learned how generally they are eaten, have often seen people buy and eat them on the spot. I used to like one occasionally and ate without much inquiry into the manner or place of their make-up, till one evening at a church fair, I saw a glaring board saying, "Drake's Tamales the Cleanest in Town." Fatal announcement! That advertisement was matched by another firm which said, "We sell at a little lower price a little better article than any other house in the city." The sagacity of advertisers!

They say that California has the biggest liars and the smallest matches in the United States. I want to speak of the latter; to the former I could not do justice. On my first arrival here, one day I found in my room a bunch of the tiniest possible matches. I thought I must have met the "boarding-house" match, and wondered if Puck had pictured the felicities of its delicate composition. It is bound up almost inseparably with a good many other minute fellow-matches, as though there were in the grain of the wood a strong bond of affection rendering isolation painful. Having broken off one, it is so frail in its aloneness, so delicate and uncertain is its individual capacity you have an uneasy feeling of having sundered a needful tie, and that the proper thing to have done was to ignite the whole bunch. This however suggests itself as being extravagant, but I don't know, —I counted nine extinct and decapitated bodies that first morning as the result of lighting the grate! That number of eastern matches would have given out perceptible heat in this climate, but after the wholesale burning of nine of these I could still see my breath in the room.

I have since come to prefer the "Chinese matches" as they are called; and natives of the west are unwilling to be cumbered with so much wood and so little match as eastern matches contain.

I recall once reading an estimate of the immense forests which are being consumed in matches, so this minimum of material is wise economy of our woodland.

HATTIE L. HALL.

LOS ANGELES.

LIES, AND LIES.

This world is not nearly as bad a world as many of the people who live in it would have us think. In fact, the more I know of it, and the better I become acquainted with the people in it—good-hearted souls some of them are—the more I think the place is as good as the most of the inhabitants. The only bad things about the world are the things that the people in it do. If the people were only as good as the world itself, we would never need to look for a better place. One of the worst things in it is the unkindness that the people do each other in some ways. Unkind words and looks are unpardonable, but it seems to me that even worse than these, because more hypocritical and secret, not allowing open encounter, is the unkindness done by talking against the absent. No one will do it but a coward, who is ashamed or afraid to say to a person's face what he delights in saying behind his back.

More than half the smaller trials of life have this very source. No vice or failing or shortcoming, whether real or imaginary, escapes the back-biter's terrible tongue, though he ought to know, and he is often glad in the knowledge, that the person attacked will hear of his unkind words. He has often an accomplice who feels it to be his very solemn and not-to-be-neglected duty to inform the person of the back-biter's every word. Talking to others against people is the way some have of "getting even" for some real or fancied injury.

The speeches of the back-biter are not all false. Oh dear, no! There is more often than not just truth enough in them to prevent a flat denial.

"A lie that is wholly a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie that is half the truth is a harder matter to fight."

If one would tell a lie made entirely out of whole cloth, it might be denied and silenced at once, but one of those horrible black lies wrapped up in a garment of truth will not admit of a denial without an explanation, which at the best is exceedingly tiresome to both speaker and listener.

Again, the back-biter may not tell lies at all, and still be more unkind and just as wicked as in the other way. He may ask questions, throw out hints, or smile a meaning smile in just the right place, and really tell nothing untrue, but succeed in leaving an untruthful impression upon the mind of his listener.

These finer differences between lies and lies are too often conscience-silencers for those who refuse to recognize a lie with a new gown on.

There is one thing that some of the

people on earth seem determined to do, and that is to have a suspicion of another person, and not keep it to themselves. They may know nothing wrong of them, but knowing of some circumstance, and realizing that under the same conditions they themselves might be led to do wrong, they immediately come to the conclusion that something is wrong, and act and talk accordingly. These are the kind of people who help to make the world bad and then endeavor to make us think it is even worse than it is.

CLARA BELLE.

MARSHALL.

A PROPOSED RENOVATION.

I am glad Mrs. A. Do. has one bright spot ahead. My bright spot is not as large as a new house, but is only the papering and rearranging of the old, and this explains my call. I want some advice relative to the matter. I know there should be a color scheme in all the furnishing and that the color should be decided by the exposure of the room, and its woodwork. My sitting-room and parlor combined is 13x15 feet, faces north, has two doors and a double window. There is an objectionable wainscotting of the usual height, so there is not much wall space to cover. We have a few fine pictures to be framed. Are no frames but expensive gilt ones suitable for oil paintings? The woodwork is finished in oil and varnished. I hope for a new carpet, to be in browns with a little yellow. I have olive shades and a golden olive table spread I want to continue to use. Economy is the first consideration; please bear this in mind, yet I want the room to be in harmony and good taste. I have a natural ability in the way of making the best of things, can paint, have plenty of patience and like to do fancy work. My south window has a rather undesirable outlook. Sash curtains are not liked, but I have read somewhere of a solution of salts used for frosting glass. Does any one know anything about it? MRS. M. E.

ST. LOUIS.

Since Mrs. M. E. wishes to use her shades and spread and also since her room has a northern exposure that probably requires light, glowing tints it might be as well to let the olive tone prevail in the color scheme. Get the carpet in shades of green, olives predominating, instead of brown and yellow; very pretty patterns are found in those hues. For the walls, choose a small patterned paper, a large pattern decreases the apparent size of the room. Do not select from samples, for it is not possible to judge of the effect of a large surface of color by a small piece. Have the salesman unroll several pieces and place them side by side, to give you an idea of the general effect, otherwise you may be surprised at the result. A cream ground with small figure not too distinct for the side walls, and that of a lighter

cream for ceiling, also with a slight tracery in small pattern would be in good taste. Or you may use a perfectly plain paper for the side walls, but it would be more expensive. As the wall is broken by a wainscotting, a narrow border or frieze is desirable; avoid anything showy or in strong contrast to the paper.

Gilt frames are most suitable for oil paintings. We should advise framing one or two pictures, well, and waiting till able to frame more, rather than framing them all at once and cheaply and unsuitably.

Directions for frosting glass with a solution of salts in stale beer were given in the HOUSEHOLD of Dec. 17th, 1892.

CURE FOR CANCER.

A lady aged about seventy-five, living near me, has lately cured a cancer with poke root, (*Phytolacca decandra*), and thinking it may be a benefit to some one with similar affliction, I send the method. She first went to a cancer institute and had one removed from her forehead. Before that was entirely healed another very much like it appeared on the back of her hand. It was examined and pronounced cancer at the institute, and forty dollars named as the price for its removal. She could not afford to pay it, and chancing to hear of others who had tried poke root with success, she came home and began the trial.

She cleaned quite a quantity of the root and boiled it until very tender, put it into a cloth and squeezed out all the juice, boiled that down to a jelly and dried to a paste in the sun on a pewter plate. (In the absence of pewter copper is said to answer the purpose.) A plaster of this paste was applied during the day, but as it was painful was laid off at night for the sake of rest. In two or three days a thick, dry scale was removed from the sore, and the plaster renewed. This was repeated until, in a short time, the cancer was quite gone and the hand healed.

THOMAS.

A. H. J.

We refer those of our readers who purpose visiting Chicago the coming summer and have not yet made arrangements for a stopping place to the advertisement of Mrs. A. E. Chadwick which appears in the FARMER this week. Mrs. Chadwick is personally known to the HOUSEHOLD Editor, and those who go to her may be sure they will obtain fair treatment, moderate prices, and comfortable accommodations.

GOOD *Housekeeping* for February is as full of good things as ever. A new department has been added—a piece of music being given. All the matter being original in this magazine its departments are full of fresh suggestions and “unthreshed straw.” C. W. Bryan & Co., Springfield, Mass.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

A simple way of marking stockings where there is a large family is to assign to each member a certain color and tie a bit of yarn of that color in the tops of the hose belonging to that individual.

A CORRESPONDENT of an exchange says that in using compressed yeast one quarter of a cake is enough for a mixing. Place the rest, with three cups of water, in a Mason jar and keep in a cool place. Use one cupful to a mixing.

MIX a tablespoonful of vinegar with the half pint or more of mixed plaster of Paris you are going to use to mend holes and cracks in plastered walls. It will keep the plaster from “setting” until you can use it without uncomfortable haste.

IN preparing dried fruit for the table, far better results are obtained by long soaking and slow cooking than by hasty preparation. Wash the fruit and then put it to soak in warm water over night. In the morning let it stew (in the water in which it was soaked) two or three hours, just simmering on the back of the stove. Add sugar the last thing, just before removing from the stove, and you will find that you will need considerably less than if the fruit had not been soaked. Dried peaches, cherries, apricots, nectarines, and even the despoised dried apple, are much more acceptable when thus prepared. Always cook dried or any other fruit in granite or agate ware, or porcelain, never in tin. The dried apricots, which sell at eighteen or twenty cents a pound, are more economical in helping out a scant supply of canned fruit than the tinned fruits.

Useful Recipes.

POTATO SOUP.—One quart of milk; six large potatoes; one stalk of celery; one onion; one tablespoonful of butter; two tablespoonfuls of salt, pepper. When the potatoes are put on to boil, put the celery, onion and milk in a double boiler over the fire. When the potatoes are done mash them at once, add the seasoned milk gradually, put through a fine sieve, return to the stove, add the butter, salt and pepper. The addition of cream greatly improves this soup.

SCALLOPED OYSTERS.—For a dish that holds three pints, allow one solid quart of oysters, one-half pint of cracker or bread crumbs (the bread should be dried and grated if used), three and a half tablespoonfuls of butter, measured with a generous hand, one and a half teaspoonfuls of salt and a third of a teaspoonful of pepper. Put one-third of the oysters in the dish; sprinkle with salt, pepper, and dot with one-third of the butter. Spread with half cup of crumbs. Put on the rest of the oysters, using the remainder of the salt and pepper, and half the butter remaining. Cover with the cracker crumbs, dot with the butter and sprinkle with the oyster liquor. Bake in a hot oven half an hour, or, if in a shallow dish, fifteen minutes. Overcooking spoils them. These are Miss Parloa's recipes.