CARING FOR OUR BOYS

Training Children for Perennial Health and Serene Old Age.

WEST POINT TOILET DISCIPLINE.

Shirley Dare's Points on Dress and Personal Appearance.

SYSTEMATIC TRAINING IN MANNERS

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

EVIDENTLY to a man who has lived as a man ought, death in the fulness of years, followed by cleanly and Christian cremation, should have no horrors. In the refined Japanese wording, he only "changes his worlds." But there is a horror indescribable in the breaking up which precedes it, in the disabilities and corruption of old age, which, upon near view, reconciles one cheerfully to quick death in mid life. There is no need of deformity, infirmity or age. Die we must, and find the curse changed to a privilege, but live, heavy with imbecility and disease, we need not. Age is the penalty of physical crime.

Do we not owe it to our children to train them in their bright-eyed youth for a summer that shall have no dark and noisome autumn of decay? "Lad," said a mother to her boy as old age in its dreariest forms passed before them, "I have spoken to you about health already, but now you can have no peace from me till you learn how to keep from such miserable end as this." Can you bear to think of supple, smooth-cheeked boys with sunlighted eyes, changing to rheumy, offensive decrepitude? Fathers and mothers, why do you not train your children for perennial health, to delight in themselves and the world they live in. There is no necessity for their becoming weakly or diseased, or for their ever growing old and losing all vigor and grace. That they should so lose their birthright is witness against those who ought to watch for their interests in the beginning.

NEGLECTED BOYS.

The neglect of boys' training in things physical and polite is surprising. If half the care given to girls about manners and toilet were bestowed on the boys of a family it were better for both. When a boy's long curls are cut close, and he is turned into jacket and trousers, good-by to petting and pleasant personal cares. He has his hair cut once a month, and plasters the front locks down to his liking with plenty of cosmetique, though I have known him a sad poacher on bandoline bottles. It requires the domestic police to enforce anything like brushing of teeth, and his hair brush looks as if it were kept under the bed in the dust. He generally needs fumigating, and his warmest friends prefer conversation with him at safe distance. He shirks his weekly bath, and writhes under the necessity of getting into clean undershirts, nay a clean starched shirt is a penalty. He goes in swimming five times a day in July, vacation and Saturdays till frost, but he makes up for it by shunning the sight of a bath as far as possible till spring. He perspires, and throws his clothes in a heap as he tosses himself into bed, and forgets to open a window. In time his cheviot suit is saturated with personal odors and it is best not to take the wind of his nobility. This peculiarity sometimes lasts into later boyhood, and it is difficult to persuade grown boys 25 and 40 years of age that woolen cloth is a dire absorbent of stale odors.

I wrote myself out of favor once with a divinity student in my teens, when after the manner of young persons we had made a serious compact to tell each of any faults perceived in the other. He really was very good and worthy, but his black coat, hanging in a close closet with unwashed shirts and socks, smelt anything but nice, and I really thought he would wish to correct the defect. Why is it that the worse and more conspicuous an offense, the more hotly the offender resents being told of it? Ought a young man to resent it when his second cousin tells him that his coat wants airing? Dropping a red-hot stone in a pail of water is a faint image of his wrath, however.

SHOULD LIVE IN A TENT.

The average boy should live under a tent, or else keep all his wardrobe not on his back outdoors, airing night and day, to insure a tolerable presence. But it is his parents' fault more than his own, if he be neither so comely or so cleanly as he might. West Point cadets are taught by the strong arm of authority, backed by all the force of arrest and punishment, to keep themselves and their belonging neat and becoming a gentleman and an officer. We want West Point discipline in homes, with all boys, and nowhere more rigid than in toilet matters, which ought to be ingrained into a lad's skin and bone, literally.

A boy's hair, though short, need not be bristly. If he is taught to shampoo his head and use a clean hair brush vigorously five minutes morning and evening, his hair will be soft as the fur of a mole. Farther, this practice in youth prevents baldness in after life. By bringing the blood into the capillaries of the scalp, it deepens and brightens obnoxious pale hair. You seldom or never see well brushed hair white at the roots, as in some raw, sandy complexions. The troublesome, stiff hair, which starts up at the crown of the head, must be reduced by thick bandoline, made by steeping gum tragacanth in water, and boiling slightly. This not only keeps hair in place but softens it when washed out, so that it learns to be smooth in time of itself. Stiff, bristly eyebrows should be rubbed over night with this bandoline, washed off next morning and brushed with cosmetic. The boy with white eyebrows may make them presentable by wetting them with amber lavender, and smoothing with warm fingers after the rest of the toilet is done. This does not blacken but gives a darkish amber tint, in harmony with the rest of the pale coloring.

TO MAKE A BOY GROW.

When the mustache begins to grow, and a razor is necessary, doctors say it is a sign that a lad has reached his growth in stature. If you would have him tall, and well grown, bring him up in the open air, with plenty of food and manly sports, neither working him at books or business till he is 21. I know very well that this advice will not be received with favor, since the idea rules that merchants will not take a lad into business later than 14, as he cannot be trained to good habits afterward. Let him be used to discipline, taught to obey orders to the letter, when given, taught dexterity, thoroughness, adaptability from his first lessons, and he will enter business ready to be useful with half the breaking in which business men find necessary with raw lads from grammar school.

It is hard to teach a boy that grubby hands and finger nails are unnecessary, even in his busy, well-filled life. Amateur carpenters and gardeners must learn to wear gloves with the finger tips cut off when at work to save the skin from knocks and grime. Gloves are as necessary for the hands of a workingman as shoes for his feet. He can get more use out of supple, comfortable hands than from stiff, horny, bruised ones. The best outfitting shops sell caseworn gloves of castor and dogskin for 15 cents a pair, for this very use. Woolen mittens are not preservative of a good skin, and supple, close-fitting lisle or leather gloves are always to be preferred. The nails and fingers should be soaked in warm water, with a little oxalic acid in it, before trimming the nails, to soften them. Water purified with alum, which is the supply in many towns, is hard for the hands, fixing every trace of grime, deepening the cracks of the skin and furrows of the nails. Boys will have chapped, raw hands, in using such water unless they can be persuaded to use of vaseline and wearing close gloves by night as well as day—not from finical refinement, but as preventive of a Lazarus condition.

THE TOILET GRINDSTONE.

The speediest way of cleaning hands of workstains is by holding them to one of the small kitchen grindstone, sold for a dollar or two, and which should be part of the appliances of every bath and dressing room in practical families. A few turns of the grindstone will reduce horny hands to satin smoothness, and wear away stains that soap and brush are powerless to remove. Dexterously used, it will keep the fingertips and nails in good shape, wearing away the thick skin at the corners of the nails, which gives boys' fingers a stubby look. Oh, those boys' hands! How soothing, life-giving and comforting they can be in their fresh, generous devotion. The little lad of 10 who fought the maids for the privilege of carrying the toast and coffee to his mother in her headaches, had the deftest, coolest hand, the nicest skill to stroke an aching brow, to arrange the couch for tired shoulders, to bring the right book and sprinkle fresh lavender with an instinct women seem to lack nowadays.

If boys are careless of manners and person, there is much to be said on the other side of the carelessness of those who train them. Systematic training in manners is found in very few families, that is the prevision of scenes and circumstances, the telling what to do beforehand in place of finding fault afterward, the kindly prompt repetition of the right things to do and to say in time and place according. How children pick up the manners they do acquire is often a mystery. At least they deserve all the aid and confidence, neat, well-fitting clothes can give them, and good clothes are far more an affair of clever taste than of money.

SHIRLEY DARE.

AN INTERESTING GUESSING MATCH.

A Few Simple Tests Which Illustrate Common Errors of Judgment.

A crank who is an occasional visitor to a downtown office entered the place the other day when nobody appeared to be very busy. Someone was telling a story in which he made mention of some object "about the size of a silver dollar," when the crank interrupted the speaker with the remark:

"I'll bet $5 there isn't a man in this office who can tell without measuring what the exact size of a silver dollar is."

The bet was not taken, for nobody knew. The crank went on:

"I am also willing to give $5 to the man who will take his pen or pencil and draw a line which shall represent the exact diameter of a silver dollar."

Upon this all hands made the attempt. A piece of paper was taken, and each took his turn at drawing a line upon it. When all had finished the crank took a dollar from his pocket and placed it successively over each of the marks. Some of them were too long by half an inch, and some lacked almost that much in length. There wasn't one which was not as much as an eighth of inch out of the way. The eccentric visitor said:

"For men who handle as much money as you do, it is strange you are not more familiar with its size and appearance. Now let me test your judgment in another matter. Here is a long sheet of white paper which I will place upright against the wall back of this table. Now take your pencils and mark on the paper what you think is the height of an ordinary silk hat. Some of you have a silk hat here, I suppose?"

"Mine is in the other room," answered one of the clerks.

"Well, let it stay there until we want it. Now try to guess how tall the hat is, and mark the paper accordingly."

The estimates afforded a curious illustration of the way men's opinions will differ even about a small matter. Between the shortest and the longest mark there was a difference of nearly four inches. When the hat was brought out and set upon the table against the paper, all the marks, with two exceptions, were from one to three inches too long. The nearest guess was made by a man who made a mark about three-quarters of an inch too short. Then the crank asked for an estimate of the difference in the height of his derby and the silk hat. The guessers didn't come as near as before.

"That is the way it is," said the crank. "People have an idea that a high hat is ever so much higher than a common one, yet you will find if you measure both that the difference is very little. The eye that is not trained in measuring distances will lead its possessor into some serious errors of judgment."

HYPNOTISM IN BERLIN.

Some Very Interesting Experiments With a Submissive Subject.

London Daily News.]

At a meeting of the Berlin Medical Society Prof. Virchow introduced a French physician, Dr. Feldmann, who made some experiments in hypnotism. A young man named Garrick offered himself as a medium. After a few seconds of the usual manipulations the medium fell into a deep magnetic sleep. He became perfectly apathetic and motionless.

In this state of "suggestion" Dr. Feldmann showed the influence of various medicaments on the medium, who took quinine for sugar, smacking his lips with enjoyment and he believed ammonia to be perfume and smelt at it for some time. Immediately afterward, following the will of the doctor, he showed the usual abhorrence of these bitter and caustic substances. With the same success he ate a lemon for an apple. A piece of camphor held on his forehead had a singular effect. The medium bent his body far backward and had to be held on his chair.

A magnet caused a dreamy state, during which the medium related his impressions as to events in the street, in which he believed himself to be. Then the medium obeyed the will of the doctor in various ways, shoveling snow, skating, falling and rising again with one jump at the doctor's suggestion, and finally took a pocketbook by force out of Prof. Virchow's pockets. He was then ordered by Dr. Feldmann to reseat himself and soon woke out of the hypnotic sleep, remembering nothing of what had happened. Two young physicians then spoke, declaring that such experiments were without scientific basis. They believed the "suggestions" to be probably genuine, but as to the other experiments especially the effect of medicines and the magnet, they thought they needed careful examination.

FACIAL EXPRESSION.

The Business of a Man Has a Great Deal to Do With It.

Herald of Health.]

A man's occupation or condition has a good deal to do with making his facial expression. Intellectual pursuits, like studies of the scholarly profession, when coupled with temperate and moral habits of life, brighten the face and give a person a superior look. Magnanimity of nature, or love of studies and arts, will make a bright, glad face; but, contrary to this, a man may have a face that does not please anybody, because of a love of self to the exclusion of all others, notwithstanding his learning and worldly shrewdness. Soldiers get a hard, severe look, overworked laborers constantly look tired, reporters look inquisitive, mathematicians look studious, judges become grave, even when off the Bench; the man who has had domestic trouble looks all broken up. An example of the ludicrous side of this subject is to see a third-class lawyer stalking around a Police Court looking wise as an owl. The business makes the face, I say. There's the butcher's face, the saloon keeper's face, the beggar's face, the ministerial face, the lawyer's face, the doctor's face, the hoodlum's face, all so distinct each from the other and singly, that I seldom fail to recognize those callings showing through the faces. And what city boy cannot recognize a genuine farmer on the street as a farmer the moment he sees him?

Horsford's Acid Phosphate
Relieves indigestion, dyspepsia, etc.

A HUMAN STORAGE BATTERY.

Peculiarities of a Resident of Joplin—How He Locates Mineral.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

The Hon. Fred W. Mott and Colonel O. A. Haines, who have just returned from a visit to Joplin and the Southeast, relate a peculiar story of a human phenomenon, a Mr. McKinstry, who is astonishing the natives there. McKinstry is six feet two inches tall, of somewhat angular and awkward build, though lithe and muscular. His peculiarity is the wonderful affinity he has for the earth and the vast amount of electricity i his system—he being, in short, a sort of an immense human Leyden jar. They say that when he walks over the ground a few hours he becomes thoroughly exhausted and so limp and helpless that he has to be assisted home. But he has to keep walking, for when he stands firmly on one spot of ground for a few seconds he becomes as if rooted, and has to have one foot assisted loose, when the other can be moved, and then, by treading up and down for a minute, the electric current becomes broken, in the course of which, however, the peculiar sparking incident, for instance, to brushing a black cat's hair backward is developed.

But what is causing a sensation there is his claim of being able to locate mineral. Most every one is familiar with a part of the process—walking over the ground with a forked peach switch, held horizontally in front of the waist, either extremity grasped in the hand, and the stem from which the two branches issue pointing frontward. McKinstry has adopted this plan, and improved on it to locate mineral. Four months ago he fitted up his simple machine and asserted his ability, not only to tell where mineral was, but just what depth it could be struck and the value of it. To search for water he simply takes the peach switch. In quest of lead he caps the knob by a ferrule of composition, in which aluminum is a large factor.

To discover a zinc deposit this gives place to a large one, in which plantinum predominates. It is stated that whenever a man has delved in the earth at a point marked by him mineral has been found at about the depth the "witch" had promised. Superintendent J. D. Vincil, of the Viroqud mine, so Mr. Mott says, offered the human battery $25 to "point" out a pocket for him. On the other hand Vincil warned the witch that in the event of a failure he (Vincil) would kill him. So confident was McKinstry in the virtue of his charm that he accepted, and going over the ground stated that zinc would be found 26 feet below the surface at a given point. Work was begun and the shaft is now 18 feet, and McKinstry still hangs nonchalantly around. He has not ordered a coffin to date.

Mr. Mott and the Colonel were so imbued with faith in the potency of the trick that they invested on the strength of what the miners believe necromancy, but which they, somewhat familiar with science, account for by the popular philosopher's stone—electricity. Mr. Mott states that each one of them grasped an end of the magic stick as it turned, thus supplementing the hold of the operator, but that the attraction was so strong that it turned, despite their combined efforts to prevent it, even twisting the bark off the branch. Everyone is watching for the development of Vincil's test. If it succeeds they will be elated by the confidence that at last they have an open sesame to the treasures hidden away in the subterranean recesses of the earth.

A HAUNTED MAINTOP.

Mystery That Was Deep and Thrilling Till it Was Explained.

Sheffield (Eng.) Telegraph.]

Talking about ghosts, our chief mate once told me that on board a ship in which he had served, the mate on duty ordered some of the youths to reef the maintopsail. When he first got up he heard a strange voice saying, "It blows hard!" The lad waited for no more; he was down in a trice and told his adventure. A second immediately ascended, laughing at the folly of his companion, but returned even more quickly, declaring he was quite sure that a voice, not of this world, had cried in his ear, "It blows hard!" Another went, and another, but each came back with the same tale.

At length the mate having sent up the whole watch, ran up the shrouds himself, and when he reached the haunted spot, heard the dreadful words distinctly uttered in his ear:

"It blows hard!"

"Ay, ay, old one; but, blow it ever so hard, we must ease the ear-rings for all that," replied the mate, undauntedly, and, looking round, he saw a fine parrot perched on one of the clews—the thoughtless author of the false alarms—which had probably escaped from some other vessel to take refuge on this.

Another of our officers mentioned that on one of his voyages he remembered a boy having been sent to clear a rope which had got foul above the mizzentop. Presently, however, he came back trembling, and almost tumbling to the bottom, declaring that he had seen "Old Davy" aft the crosstrees. Moreover, that the evil one had a huge head and face, with prick-ears and eyes as bright as fire. Two or three others were sent up in succession, to all of whom the apparition glared forth, and was identified by each to be "Old Davy," sure enough.

The mate, in a rage, at length mounted himself, when resolutely, as in the former case, searching for the bugbear, he soon ascertained the innocent cause of so much terror to be a large horned owl, so lodged as to be out of sight to those who ascended on the other side of the vessel, but which, when anyone approached the cross-trees, popped up his portentous visage to see what was coming. The mate brought him down in triumph, and "Old Davy," the owl, became a very peaceful shipmate among the crew, who were no longer scared by his horns and eyes, for sailors turn their back on nothing when they know what it is.

Had the birds in these two instances departed as they came, of course they would have been deemed supernatural visitants to the respective ships by all who had heard the one and seen the other.

STRANGE CHANGES OF NAMES

Made in Bringing the Gaelic Into the Saxon Tongue.

London Truth.]

So long as the practice of translation is confined to Christian names it does not much matter, but when O'Mulligan (O'Maolagain) "translates" himself, as he does very frequently, into Baldwin, because Maol—bald, he obviously lays a very dangerous trap for the after-coming ethnologist, who will certainly take this shame-faced Gael for a bluff Saxon. O'Mulligan, however, generally speaking, makes a Frenchman of himself as Molyneux. O'Birn and O'Brian, of Roscommon and Wicklow, once content to misspell themselves as O'Beirne and O'Byrne, respectively, have now a great fancy for calling themselves Biron and Byron, and sometimes De Byron, and desire to be thought of Norman origin. Nearly all the O'Darcys and MacDarcys, of Connaught, who used to be humbly anglicized "Darkey" (for the Gaelic "c" is hard), now have assumed the name and arms of D'Arcy from the well-known Meath family of that name whose Norman origin is undoubted. MacMullen, by the way, does not seem to know when to stop. He can't let his name alone. I remember when he modestly Anglicized himself "Mullins." Now he is Desmoulins or Demoleyne. God forgive him.

Winter Scenes at Connecticut.

From the Hartford Courant.]

A Farmington man plowed a field on New Year's Day.

In Shelton, last Friday, men and boys, in their shirt sleeves, were skating on the canal.

A Danbury paper says that the buds of the pussy willow trees are bursting in that section—something which rarely happens until April.

It was a common sight in the country sections recently to see cattle grazing in the fields.

THE DIZZY WALTZ

Still the Most Popular Dance in Metropolitan Society.

ORIGIN OF THIS PASTIME.

How a Good Waltz Step Should be Cultivated by Beginners.

A PROFESSOR'S PRACTICAL POINTERS

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

"WHAT is the most popular dance this season?" repeated the professor, raising his eyebrows in mild but polite surprise; "Why, the waltz, to be sure. There is never anything most popular but the waltz. It has held a pre-eminent position in social entertainment almost from the time it was first introduced. There are other dances which the accomplished gentleman or lady must know, but the waltz comes first in order of learning and first in order of importance."

The professor paused and pulled nonchalantly at his embryonic mustache. He was a disappointment to look upon; one of the most celebrated masters of the dance, with a name that sounded distinguished by the very arrangement of its letters, and a comfortable income from its clientage in the highest society; all these things led to a mind picture of him as tall, distingue, handsome, and with just that command of demeanor that stands midway between pomposity and condescension; yet, here he was, short, commonplace even to weariness, and in spite of the confidence which naturally

About to Begin.

arose from his thorough knowledge of his profession, blushing like a school boy at the idea of explaining the mysteries of the dance to a writer. The mark of a gentleman was upon him, however, in every action. Without the slightest effort he moved gracefully, was courtesy itself, and even his language took upon it some of the finish of the cultivated man. When he was complimented for these attractive traits, he blushed still deeper and said that it was all due to the attention he had paid to learning and teaching society accomplishments.

"The waltz," he said, "originated, as perhaps you know, in Bohemia, and it is frequently styled 'the German national dance.' Just when it arose, it is difficult of course to say, but it was some time in the latter part of the eighteenth century. It was discovered by the French and English early in this century and made instant progress into popularity all over the civilized world. We begin with that in teaching our students for two reasons: First, perhaps, because it is the one thing the student is most ambitious to learn, and as a rule you know society people are not much inclined to go through a long season of dry and routine exercises, as piano students have to before they reach the practice of the thing they ultimately wish to master. The second reason, which is the better one from the point of view of the terpsichorean artist, is that a good waltz step cultivates that grace of

In Bad Form.

movement and command of the limbs which is essential to good dancing of any variety. I can imagine that one may begin with the contra dances, such as the Virginia reel and the simpler quadrilles, and go through the evolutions required by them in perfect form. Yet, if this were the case, when he came to take up the waltz, he would be just as badly off as if he were a novice, with the single exception that he would have learned to pose well when not in motion. The fact is, however, that few people who begin with the square dances learn to do them well. If you were ever at a country ball you have only to remember the styles in vogue there to see the truth of this. Your country gentleman, who doubtless takes as much delight in dancing as the most cultivated member of the Four Hundred, is full of life and energy, and is all action regardless of grace. In a crude way his movements are rythmical, but there is no uniformity in the steps he takes and a dozen different steps may be in use during the same dance by as many different people. Such a man, accustomed to holding his hands behind his back and keeping up a light shuffle at every bar of the music, or even cavorting about the room more vio-

The Old-Fashioned Way.

lently, would cut a rather sorry figure in the society waltz, even granting that he knew somewhat about the movements. So, as I say, it is the best thing to begin with the waltz, because there we cultivate that grace which is necessary to all society behavior. The man who has learned to waltz well will find all other dances and all other behavior easy matters to acquire."

"What is the first thing taught to the beginner?"

"We begin with a gentlemanly or lady-like pose and show to the pupil how to stand correctly while waiting for that bar of the music to sound which will be his cue for beginning to dance. The initial pose is, of course, very natural and easy to learn, though it is frequently a somewhat difficult matter to impress upon the pupil that he or

Private Practice.

she must not crook the elbow or raise the hands above the point where they naturally lie when clasped. Your awkward waltzer takes the lady's hand in a firm grip and raises it to about the level of his face, and with his other arm he either grasps her tight about the waist or seizes hold of her elbow and starts out on a dance as if he were a fish with fins on each side fully extended. All that is wretched. The lady's hands should rest lightly upon his arm just below the shoulder, and his hand should just touch the back of her waist. When we have impressed this rule upon the pupil, the next thing is to learn the step. This is to be taught by imitation, of course, and the only general point that I can give about it without giving a lesson outright is that in making the step the toe should not be turned in. It is the mistake made by all dancers who are careless or who have been poorly taught."

"What happens if the toe is turned in in making the step?"

"Merely that you step upon your partner's foot. See here," and with this the professor went to a wardrobe and took out a pair of low dancing shoes of expensive pattern. "These," he said, "are what I wear when I am teaching beginners, and I call your attention to the remarkable way in which they have been bruised."

The shoes looked as if somebody had set them upon the floor and stamped upon them and kicked them so as to put a scratch or bruise upon every part of their surface.

"All these wounds," continued the professor, "were made by clumsy dancers, who would insist upon turning the toe in as they took the steps. You may imagine that I had some severe knocks, but I manage to stand it as long as the shoes do. If the dancer simply steps straight forward he will never stumble nor injure his partner's foot. An-

Mismanaged.

other thing that never happens with good waltzers is the collision of the knees. By the necessities of the dance your knees are almost touching those of your partner, yet if you understand how to take the steps she will never be conscious that either you or herself has anything like a knee. This excellent feature of the perfect waltz can never be acquired if the dancer persists in bending his knee during either the initial pose or any portion of the dance. So many men seem to think that it adds a certain springiness to their motions if they bend the legs more or less during the dance. The fact is the spring of the waltz should come entirely from the muscles of the lower limbs, and the bend of the knees only adds awkwardness, and not grace, to the movements."

"Are good dancers able to avoid the actual collision with other couples during a ball?"

"Not always. It depends very largely upon the number of couples dancing, and somewhat upon the watchfulness of the gentleman. But in a crowded ballroom, be the parties ever so careful, it is almost impossible to avoid some collisions. No serious results may follow, however, such a complete upsetting of one or other of the parties, unless one or both are exceedingly careless and awkward."

"Are there any new forms of the waltz in vogue this season?"

"None that can be described. As new pieces of music are composed, each academy or professor may invent some little variation to suit himself, but as a rule it may be said that the waltz proper remains the same from one season to another. It is not like the square dances, where there are a certain number of evolutions to go through, but it may be danced continuously or left off at the will of the performer."

QUEER FINDS IN PIANOS.

Some of the Curious Things That Get Between the Keys.

Philadelphia Ledger.]

The variety of articles that piano tuners find in pianos is remarkable. One says he found four diamonds in a piano and received a very substantial reward for his discovery from the lady who had employed him. "You can understand the shock given to a ring," he said, "when a lady is playing and brings her fingers down in a crescendo. If a stone happen to be loose, away it goes, and with that rare affinity which valuable things have for getting into strange places, it promptly gets between the keys and works down into the framework of the instrument.

And little things like gems are not the only ones lost in this way. I have founds coins of all sorts in a loosely set piano, hairpins, visiting cards, and the like. Where there are children around the accumulation becomes greater, for the little rascals have a fashion of stuffing pianos full of every small thing they can get their mishievous little fingers on. Of course, the tone of the piano is very much injured by the presence of anything beneath or behind the keys, but very few persons who use the instrument can distinguish when it is a quarter tone out of the way, especially when they are using the piano themselves."

A Young Minister's Mistake.

Philadelphia Record.]

Pretty Girl—Yes, I like that young minister: but I really do think he might have a little more judgment. I know I'm not very wicked, but he imagines I'm going straight to perdition.

Friend—Oh, you must be mistaken.

"No, I'm not. There are lots worse sinners in the congregation than I am, and yet, no matter what wickedness he preaches against, he always looks right straight at me."

CLARA BELLE'S CHAT.

Vanderbilt and Astor Ladies Come Out for Charity's Sake.

HICKS-LORD'S PRETTY TEA ROOM.

How a Dancing Master Manages to Do Business at the Old Stand.

THE SWEET-SCENTED MRS. J. B. POTTER

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.]

NEW YORK, January 12.—The vast parquet area of the Metropolitan Opera House was smoothly floored over, and so was the spacious stage, thus making a waxed level almost as gleaming and slippery as a frozen lake. The boxes and all other places for spectators were crowded, but not a person was on this immense floor. A numerous orchestra, placed away up aloft, broke forth suddenly with a Lohengren march. To this martial music a couple stepped forth, and became instantly the focus for 10,000 eyes. Behind them a second pair instantly halved the scrutiny of the assemblage, and a procession thus headed went once clear around the edges of the floor, and then through the center. But the two ladies in the quartet at the lead were the cynosures of all eyes. The foremost was Mrs. William Astor, matronly in a trailing gown of emerald green velvet, with a frontage of diamonds, and gems otherwise disposed upon her person to the aggregate value of something like a quarter of a million dollars. The second lady was Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, younger than her companion in distinction, and dressed more youthfully in rose-colored tulle, but decorated with diamonds almost as profusely. They had partners respectively in Elbridge T. Gerry and Ambrose C. Kingsland, but nobody cared much about them. Two of the richest ladies in America were on view, and even their familiar acquaintances watched them eagerly and critically. They were formally opening the Charity Ball of this week.

This was the first time that either an Astor or a Vanderbilt lady had consented to officiate thus at a public ball, even for charitable purposes. They had formerly countenanced the affair by an hour or two of presence in their boxes as spectators, but had not consented to step on the dancing floor. On this occasion of unprecedented condescension they did not do any dancing with the multitude. They simply marched at the front of the parade and then retired to their boxes. The usage is to form sets of lanciers out of the procession at its conclusion, the openers of the ball taking their places in a set at the top of the hall. But this time, in deference to the refusal of Mesdames Astor and Vanderbilt to lend their countenance so extensively as that, the initiatory lanciers was omitted, and the music changed instead to a waltz, in which those who chose to joined, while the two millionairesses retired. Nevertheless, it is believed that Mrs. Astor favors a relaxation of that affected exclusiveness which has brought the McAllister people into ridicule. This same week she gave an afternoon and evening reception to which she invited over a thousand persons. As a summons into the Astor presence at home means formal social recognition, it will be seen that the hostess has for this occasion at least multiplied the Four Hundred by two and a half.

Of all the afternoon teas spread in or about New York that of Mrs. Hicks-Lord's is the most elegant. The tearoom in her Washington square mansion is finished in mahogany, and every article of furniture is framed in that wood and polished like a mirror. Covering the walls and hung on panels and screens are small pictures in oil, heads of historical braves and beauties in enamel, porcelain or paint, photos of most of the reigning sovereigns of the world with autographs, besides pictures of men and women of world-renown fame. One table screen is devoted to miniatures variously jeweled, any one of which would keep a pantry in supplies for at least a month. On a side table is a sort of animal kingdom, with dogs, lions, horses, deer, sheep, cats, moose, chamoise, buffalos, leopards, cows and a score of other brutes ranging from one to nine inches in height, made of steel, bellmetal or silver. All round the room set on the shelf of the paneled wainscot are cut glass tumblers the size of a claret glass, filled with pink and scarlet carnations, making a perfect belt of color about the room and fire place. The tea table is also bordered, and so are the numerous stands, laden with bric-a-brac. On the hearth stone swings the tea kettle from a brass crane, and the sparkle of cut crystal on the table, with the gas light falling over it, is something dazzling. In the service is a paper porcelain tray of tea cups; silver kettle and egg filled with salt for the almonds; and cracker bowl, almond jar, olive boat, ice tray, lemon dish and sugar basin, all of the finest cut crystal that can be found in or out of the Russiam Empire.

There is a great deal of argument being indulged in at present in regard to the morality of dancing, but if any one has an idea that the rotatory exercise is growing unpopular in New York he should contemplate the patronage of the leading dancing teacher of the town, who has his big square house on Fifth avenue thronged with pupils from morning till night, and then up to 12 o'clock. At 5 o'clock on every afternoon, when the young people's classes are breaking up, the avenue in the locality is thronged with a larger array of carriages than the greatest social event in New York could call forth, and the hurrying, skurrying children with their maids and their mothers form one of the most bewildering sights of the metropolis.

A clever thing on the part of the swell dancing master is his manner of retaining people for his pupils season after season. He does this by inventing a new dance each winter, and altering the waltz to such an extent as to make it necessary to go to him for the latest movement. In this way he keeps ladies on his floor that were considered the poetry of motion more than ten years ago. Considering the immense crowds of patrons that this man receives, his income during the winter must be quite colossal. Now that the minuet is to be fashionable again, he will doubtless have to hire some more mansions to accommodate his overflow of customers.

One of the most painful transformations that I have lately been aware of is that which has overtaken a woman who, a few years ago, was as physically luxurious as any actress on our stage, whose spherical gorgeousness of body was impossible to surpass, so pink, so lovely was she. I remember Selina Dolaro when she represented all that was gorgeously sensuous in comic opera, and afterward all that was plump and delicious in comedy. She looked then as if an illness was as much out of her line as a gloomy expression of countenance.

The other evening at a theater my escort desired to leave the house between the acts. His seat was the fourth one from the aisle, and it was with considerale hesitation that he began to disturb the people in those three end seats. His immediate neighbor was a sour and fat old man, who made it as disagreeable as possible for him when he passed, by digging knees into his back and muttering imprecations at him for putting him to such a bother. The other seats in the row were occupied by a very much emaciated and sorrowful looking woman whom my friend really disliked to disturb, and a young, rosy-cheeked fellow who showed an evident desire to make the journey past him as pleasant as possible. My companion expressed regret at disturbing these two. The woman in a gentle voice and sweet smile, said: "It is of no consequence, sir." Her young companion stood up in the aisle, and made some courteous remark. Then I looked at the two good-natured people. One was the faint, but pleasant shadow of Selina Dolaro. The other was E. Heron Allen, the erstwhile palm reader. I am not acquainted with either of them, but their evident good nature, especially in a circumstance which seems to worry most people in most remarkable way, deserves a word of commendation in these times of short tempers and extensive selfishness. If we were all so glad as they to be pleasant amid trifling vexations this big city of hours would be a sweeter center of existence.

Mrs. James Brown Potter is a "rank" bad actress, no doubt, but off the stage is as sweet as a breath of violets. Her very hair is redolent, and not only laces, handkerchief, gloves and girdle, but her sleeves, drapery, skirts and even the flowing cloak fills the senses with the delicious perfume of that flower every time a fold changes or the wearer moves. Every woman of refinement for ages has worshiped the incense of odors, and in these days of originality and invention, each has a scheme of her own for secretly appropriating the favorite scent. Mrs. Potter's hobby is sachet pillows, of which she has as many as there are dresses in her trousseau. The pillows are a yard long and 18 inches wide, made of light silk, and filled with a layer of wadding and two pounds of violet powder. When a dress is folded the sachet is laid between the skirt and waist, and when it is worn the fragrance is perceptible at every motion. The same care is taken by the lovely Cora with her gloves and linen, and in place of the customary shampoo of bay rum or Florida water, the reddish brown tresses are rinsed in extracts of violets for which she pays $5 a pint. At a little company in Mrs. Potter's parlor the guests, some two or three of the literati, a celebrated beauty and two intimate friends, were regaled with cold lemonade, oaten meal biscuits and violets—candied, distilled and natural. The fair hostess was enthusiastic about her appearance as *Cleopatra*, and playfully sailed about the room to show off some of the jewels and costly wraps just received from Paris. About the bustle there is absolutely nothing to say, other than to confirm her aversion. Not one of her gowns is projected or extended by reed or steel, sack or tournure, of which fact she is very proud, for her back is superb. Nothing like it is to be found in society, photography or the play house. It is so beautifully curved that a grace hoop could be placed in the turn at the belt. Beside being the first woman to lay aside the tournure on all occasions, she has set the fashion of wearing no collar. The neck of her dresses are cut low enough to show the clavicle, and an inch frill of crepe lisse is the finish.

CLARA BELLE.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF JESUS.

Nazareth as it Appears in the Nineteenth Century.

Century.]

One of the best views of the city is to be had from the campanile of the Church of the Annunciation. In the distance is the brow of the hill to which Jesus was led by the enraged multitude who attempted to throw him from it. A modern house in the foreground brings to mind the time when they uncovered a roof and let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. This must be very much the same kind of house as that historical one at Capernaum. There is the peculiar roof, and there are the outside stairs leading to the roof. The Eastern householder makes his roof serve for more than a protection from the weather. It is the piazza, the quiet place of the dweller, and sometimes it becomes his summer residence. As a rule it is not very heavy or very strong. Rafters are thrown across from wall to wall, say a yard apart; then the whole space is covered with twigs such as we saw the women selling in the market place. On these the slender limbs of trees are thrown and thickly coated with mortar. Lastly, a thick spread of earth is thrown on, rolled to a level, and oftentimes sown with grass seed.

Thus by care many of the roofs become as smooth and soft as a machine-mown lawn. They may be easily broken up and anything lowered inside from above. By some such process the four bearers of the poor palsied man managed to enlist the attention of the Great Physician in behalf of their friend. It is not hard to understand it all when viewing such a house as this one at Nazareth. It would not be difficult for four men to carry a lame friend in a hammock by the outer stairway up to the roof, and, breaking through, let him down into the apartment or court below.

Not far from this same house, in a narrow street, is a little chapel erected upon the site of Joseph's carpenter shop. Over the altar is a picture representing Mary and Joseph instructing Jesus, and finding that he knew more than they. Another painting represents the lad Jesus assisting his father at work. It contains no accessories of the carpenter's shop, but there are enough of them in the shops close by. The websaw, the gluepot, the plane and the hammer are the principal tools used in such shops, all without the modern improvements. Yet whatever the Palestine carpenter produces is from the fragrant cedars of Lebanon or from the eccentrically knotted and gnarled olive wood. The operation of bargaining and waiting for any article of wood to come from a Palestine carpenter shop is a lengthy one. Articles of wood are a luxury there, and when the carpenter receives an order for one he usually employs the next three days of his life in soliciting the congratulations of his friends upon his wonderful good fortune in receiving "an order for something made of wood."

A STUDY IN STILL LIFE.

The Camera as a Means to Assist a Drunkard to Reform.

Indianapolis Journal.]

The camera in the hands of a photographer has served many uses, but its value as a temperance advocate has never been fully tested. A few days since a couple of enthusiastic photographers, with an instantaneous pocket instrument a little longer than a sardine box, appeared at one of the city hotels and informed the clerk that they came to photograph a friend who had been taken violently drunk the day before, and and who was still largely under the influence of the ardent.

Inquired of as to the reason for wishing to make a counterfeit presentment of the vinous individual they said their object was to reform him by exhibiting to him, on his next occasion of sobriety, a picture of himself taken in an advanced stage of whisky, and that this exhibit, thus made, would in all probability have the same effect upon him that the sight of a drunken woman had upan the Spartan youth—teaching him the need of moderation in his cups. The hotel people, at first disinclined to permit any copying from the still-life of the character referred to, were induced to relent and cooperate in the proposed reformation, and the expedition, including a reporter who was taken along to chronicle the success of the new method, proceeded to hunt up its proposed subject. There was no question of his fitness for that test when found. Like Marmion, he had fallen in mid-battle. One boot had been subtracted, but the other remained, and as if to leave no doubt as to the means of his overthrow he had gone to bed with his hat on.

It required but a moment to supply the few details necessary to make the picture effective. An American flag draped after the manner of a winding sheet, a few bottles and tumblers peeping out through the interstices, and the inscription, "We have given him up for gone," on a tag pinned to his collar, told the whole story. The instrument was leveled and sighted. Snap! and with an instant's opening of the shutter-valve, the whole scene was perpetuated for all time to come. If the victim does not reform when he gets his copy of that picture, there is no hope for him.

EVERY household in the land should have Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup convenient. 25 cents.

HUMAN ANT-EATERS.

Men Who Eagerly Devour the Black Insects Instead of Pickles,

ESTEEMING THEM A DAINTY FOOD.

Curious Facts and Superstitions About Wise Little Creatures

WHICH PHILOSOPHERS HAVE PRAISED

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

SHOULD a Maine lumberman find a stump or rotten log with thousands of big black ants in it, he scoops the torpid insects from their winter domicile and fills his dinner pail with them. When he gets back to his camp at night he sets the pail in a cool place until his supper is ready, then brings it forth, and, while helping himself to pork and beans, helps himself also to ants. There is no accounting for tastes, and he esteems a handful of ants a very choice morsel. The animal called the ant eater is by no means the only one entitled to the name, for the Yankee woodchopper is an ant eater and so is the black bear, the skunk and other denizens of the wilds. This statement is made, not with the intention of classing together all the animals which have a liking for this particular species of food, but merely to point out one trait which they possess in common. It must not be inferred that all lumbermen eat ants; the taste is one which must be acquired, as few men are naturally insectivorous.

Ants are said by those who have tasted them to have a peculiarly agreeable, strongly acid flavor. The woodsmen, whose food consists largely of salted meat, baked beans and similar hearty victuals, naturally have a craving for something sour. "Ants are the very best of pickles," said an old "logger," who confessed to having devoured thousands of them. "They are cleanly insects, and there is no reason why they should not be eaten, if one can get over a little squeamishness caused by the thought of taking such crawling things into his stomach. There is nothing repulsive about them, and when a man has once learned to eat the creatures as pickles he prefers them to any other kind."

ANTS AS LARGE AS FOXES.

Ants have at various times and in different countries been quite extensively used in medicine, and formic acid, which was first obtained by distilling the bodies of these insects, but is now artificially prepared, is a well known and useful chemical product.

Herodotus tells of ants that live in the deserts of India which are in size "somewhat less than dogs, but larger than foxes." These creatures, in heaping up the earth after the manner of common ants, were a very efficient aid to the Indian gold hunters. The sand which they threw up being largely mixed with gold, the Indians were accustomed to go to the desert in the heat of the day, when the ants were under ground, load the sand into sacks, pile the sacks upon their camels and hasten from the spot as rapidly as possible. The ants, according to the historian, were not only the swiftest of animals, but were gifted with such a sense of smell that they immediately became aware of the presence of men in their territory, and unless the Indians got away while the ants were assembling to attack them not a man could escape. The strangest thing about this remarkable statement by the "father of history" is the fact that he seemed to believe it, and Strabo, Pliny and other writers of a later period inserted it, together with other marvelous stories, in their works.

The wisdom and the industry of the ant have furnished texts for moralists and philosophers from Solomon's time to the present day. One writer speaks of the creatures as "exemplary for their great piety, prudence, justice, valor, temperance, modesty, charity, friendship, frugality, perseverance, industry and art."

INSECT LANGUAGE.

"It is no wonder that Plato, in Phædone, hath determined that they who without the help of philosophy have led a civil life by custom or from their own diligence, they had their souls from ants, and when they die they are turned to ants again. To this may be added the fable of the Myrmidons, a people of Ægina, who applied themselves to diligent labor in tilling the ground, continued digging, hard toiling and constant sparing, joined with virtue, and they grew thereby so rich that they passed the common condition and ingenuity of men and Theogonis knew not how to compare them better than to pismires, that they were originally descended from them, or were transformed into them, and, as Strabo reports, they were therefore called Myrmidons."

Franklin believed that ants had the faculty of communicating their thoughts to one another, and the observations which he made of the creatures' habits only strengthened this opinion. Having noted that when an ant discovers any delicacy, such, for instance, as a lump of sugar, it at once runs into its hole and presently returns with a sufficient number of companions to carry it away, he concluded the insects must have some kind of a language. He made a very interesting experiment to test their cunning. Putting a small earthen pot containing treacle into a closet he found that the vessel was soon alive with ants. Shaking them all out of the pot except a single ant, he suspended the vessel to a nail in the ceiling by a small string. When the ant had ate its fill of the molasses it of course began to try to find some way out of the pot.

FACTS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

After running about on the bottom and sides of the vessel for some time it finally found its way to the top, espied the string, ran up to the ceiling, and thence along the wall and descended to the floor. It had not been gone half an hour when a whole army of ants came marching in, climbed the wall, ran along the ceiling to the string and down into the pot. How did the ants find where the treacle was, and how to get at it, unless their comrade informed them?

There are perhaps as many superstitions regarding ants as about any living creatures. They were used in divination by the Greeks, and it was thought that battles between them presaged conflicts of human armies. The English north country people have a belief that it is a sign of coming good fortune to dream of ants. In some of the Southern States ants are said to be fairies, and superstitious people say they must never be killed, for if they are, the cows will be bewitched and give no milk. The Hindoos believe that good luck comes to the house where ants gather, and it is said they have a custom of depositing each morning small portions of sugar near the ants' nests.

Ants have been sacrificed on heathen altars, and savages have a belief that they furnish food to spirits dwelling upon the earth. In Germany and other parts of Europe the wood ants and their pupæ are gathered and dried and sold as food for birds. In several parts of the world the pupæ of the ants are regarded as a choice edible by man, if the testimony of travelers and naturalists is true.

BARNEY.

Not Quite Ideal.

Harper's Bazar.]

"The ideal country is that where there are no classes," sighed young Mr. Honeymoon. "But there are no classes in this country, Alfred," said his fair young bride, stirring the batter for the cakes. "Yes, there are. There are cooking classes" rejoined Alfred, and again he sighed deeply.