

**OUR SOCIAL CHAT**

All letters intended for this department should be addressed to "Aunt Jennie," care of The Progressive Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.

**Aunt Jennie's Letter.**

Just now before it is too late and you are obliged to say I "didn't think," I wish to remind you that cold weather is coming. I know that the whistle of the October breeze is as jolly as that of a boy coming home from school; but the boy is usually hungry, and if there is nothing cooked, his whistle loses its zest and there is sadness or disappointment in its vibration. Now, if we do not prepare for winter, we may not have the time or inclination to whistle.

Are there any broken panes in the windows that the wind can steal through?

Are the chimneys all right, or had you forgotten to fix that fire-place in the back room where the hearth sunk several inches last winter?

By the way, you know that the roof leaked just a little when we had that last hard rain. Well, roofs have a very provoking habit of leaking more and more every time it rains; so a few shingles may fix it now, while it will require many if you put it off.

Have you stored the winter wood and is it where it will keep dry? Remember the good wife must have three edible meals every day (this you have a perfect right to expect); but let me tell you, that no woman can cook with wet or green wood and keep her temper. She may not let you know it; but she does get provoked in spite of her efforts to stay calm, and I think that she has a perfect right to feel neglected if you do not see that she has a sufficient quantity of wood, and that wood seasoned and put where it will stay dry.

I have never said very much about kindling for quick fires because we can buy a patent "kindler" here in town which answers every purpose for which it was intended; but not so in the rural districts, therefore I beg that you see that there is kindling, good, fat kindling, always ready. Let me tell you men a secret: if you want your wife to wish herself home again, unfettered by matrimonial claims, you just stay in bed and let her get up in a cold room, go through several cold rooms to a cold kitchen; find no wood or kindling, and have to go to the back yard and bring it in all soaking wet, and try to cook with it. You may find all the fault you please with your breakfast after she has an experience of this kind, but let me tell you that she does not care if you do. You may "fuss" as much as you please; but down in her innermost heart she feels no compunction of conscience; for she knows that she has done the best she could. It was not her fault that the biscuits were soggy and the other things half done, for you insisted on having breakfast on time, and the fire would not burn. I know that we wo-

men are to blame for some things, but we cannot cook without fire.

Do the men do the milking at your house? If they do, I know that they will have a nice shed and some arrangement so that they will not have to wade in slush half shoe deep in the cow lot this winter. I know that our women are brave and usually face life's duties unflinchingly, but there is no woman who is compelled to milk in the open lot without a shelter and her feet imbedded in filth, who does not wish that she was a man—for awhile at least; then she could remedy the evil instead of being obliged to endure it. A manly man will not subject his wife or daughters to such humiliation when he can easily avoid it. Look up the cow lot plan in last week's Progressive Farmer.

Last year we advised warm houses for the chickens, and one young farmer built a nice new house for his and forgot to provide sufficient ventilation. When the fowls began to die, he was told to knock off a few planks on the top of the house and found that was all that was needed and he lost no more fowls. Of course animals are not so cold-natured as we are, but that they do suffer from cold in our climate unless properly protected we know to be a fact, and therefore we trust that you will be considerate of them this winter. A bony horse or cow is a poor advertisement for your farm and of you as a farmer.

Mrs. Merryman comes to us from DeLand, Fla., this week, and we are delighted to have her with us and welcome her as one of us.

There are several who contribute to our department who insist that we run free advertisements for certain proprietary products owned and advertised extensively by moneyed corporations able to pay for said advertisements, and we hope that the innocent writers of such letters will not become offended with us when they fail to see their letters in full in this department, as free advertising is not our forte.

AUNT-JENNIE.

**Dresses for Little Tots.**

Dear Aunt Jennie:—All through the warm weather the tiny tots in their bright dresses have seemed like butterflies flitting about the green lawns, and now that the autumn tints are showing in the woodlands, and cool days call for warmer garments, it is time to consider what they shall be.

The bright colors are no less desirable with a background of somber brown or the fleecy snow that comes later, and the beauty-loving eyes of the children are never satisfied with the more sober colors.

If new cloth is to be used, it is an easy matter to select pleasing colors, but it is not always as convenient in using material that has been used before. The best parts of dresses that have been discarded by the mother or older sister may be used with good results if it is first made to look like new cloth. This can be done by washing the material in

tepid suds, rinsing in clear water and drying in the shade. It should be well pressed on the wrong side or with a thin cloth over it.

Dark blue, brown and gray may all be used for children if some bright color is used for the trimming. If the original color of the material is light it will be best to dye it some bright color. Red is a favorite color for children, and there are so many pretty shades of that color that all tastes and complexions may be suited.

A cape or jacket and cap like the dress adds much to the looks and is well liked by the child.

MRS. R. E. M.

DeLand, Fla.

**A Day in the Woods.**

Dear Aunt Jennie:—Now is the time for tramps across the meadows and over the sun-glinted hills, and I am enjoying it to the fullest extent. The tender browns, the soft yellows, branze, purple, orange and greens, all blend in such perfect harmony as never brush of artist could attain.

What is that I see in the distance? It seems the entrance to some royal estate. The two giant golden posts are our own native maples in autumn's robes of state and the gate is insignificant under brush interlaced with a crimson creeper.

The scarlet sumac gleams like camp-fires at interval along the road and the small black-gum trees wave their crimson flags at every approach to the heavily-timbered forest. Our own persimmon trees stand in their dignity, clothed in subdued combinations of yellow, brown, green and black and quietly invite us to inspect their store of future sweet fruit.

Nature never makes mistakes in her blending of colors, and the eye never tires of autumnal splendors. How I long to transfer her harmony to canvas! But alas! mortals are incapable of blending as the Master Artist does. We are never shocked when we behold His canvases. Who can define the limits to the happiness occasioned by the merely picturesque? The fine arts cannot flourish in a bustling atmosphere; the finer feelings develop best where there is leisure to let the mind throw out little tendrils to cling about old associations and traditions.

Our strolls are never hurried and we do not allow ourselves to think of a given point as a turning goal, but gather flowers by the way, watch the birds as they flit noiselessly by, and contemplate the pictured clouds as they float majestically overhead. Scarcely anyone exists who has not within himself some potencies for this sort of pleasure; and who does not experience yearnings for just enough knowledge of some art to enable him to feel that he has that about him which is the beginning of an artist? You can afford the expenditure of a little time and strength in the pursuit of pleasure to be found in a walk to the beautifully-tinted woods.

I think that now, as never before,

there is deep need among this generation of young people who are intense, zealous and set after profit of a material sort in everything they do, of some attention to those pursuits which confer simple enjoyment, yet do something also in the way of lifting our spirits above the level of every-day life. I am beginning to believe that there is truth in the old Arabian proverb which says, "Allah does not count from our lives and days spent in the chase."

With best wishes. MARY.

**A Word About Babies.**

Too much food and too little nourishment is doing a great deal of harm to many little ones. For infants who must be "bottled," milk diluted with barley-water, a grain of salt and a pinch of sugar added, given lukewarm from an absolutely clean bottle and nipple every two hours (never oftener), is, I consider, a perfect food, and a fat, jolly baby will result. But common sense must be used. A mother can soon tell whether her baby cries from hunger or from over-feeding. Don't ask any one; judge for yourself.

For children the simpler the meals, the fewer sweets, candies and uncessaries, the better. For breakfast in the summer give them bread and butter, milk, sliced tomatoes or any fresh fruit but oranges, which would not agree with milk. Pineapple is indigestible, though the juice is good.

In winter give porridge, and be sure it is well boiled and that too much sugar is not added. The porridge may be made from oatmeal, rolled wheat, cracked wheat, hominy, corn-meal, bread ~~meals~~ or sliced bananas (no purgative medicine is ever needed if fruit be given in mornings when necessary). On Sunday an egg, poached or boiled.

For dinner give any meat but pork, soup or fish, all vegetables (except corn), a plain pudding, no pie or boiled paste.

For tea give bread and butter, milk or cocoa, occasionally preserve, maple syrup, rhubarb or honey.

The more moderation is exercised in eating, the better. The food should be plain, good and appetizing, and the children should be given all they want.

If children's appetites are not spoiled by sweets they will enjoy everything put before them.—October Woman's Home Companion.

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