

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.

"Some of us never seem to learn
To take our troubles as they come,
To meet each worry in its turn—
We look ahead and borrow some.
Just when the rose is ruddiest
We grieve because it will not
stay—
Our hands upon the thorns are
pressed;
We make to-morrow of to-day.
We trade the gold of one day's joy
For dross of doubt and discontent—
The fine gold we dull with alloy
Of baser metals, meanly blent.
And yet to-morrow never shows
A dawn so dark or noon so gray
As drawn by one whose borrowed
woes
Have made to-morrow of to-day."

There is in most communities at least one woman who is at all times, and under all circumstances, a welcome visitor to the homes of all her neighbors. Why is this? Why, if you have troubled to watch her, you will know that she is one of those cheerful souls who (as James Whitcomb Riley says), "wear their clouds inside out to see the lining," and they are ever ready to help you to turn your clouds inside out. She is tactful in the turning and convinces you while she does it that it is so much better for your welfare to view the other side of it.

"I want to cheer up all women," we hear her say, in her breezy way, "if for no other reason than just because they are women—not alone because they are tired, hard-worked wives and anxious mothers, but just because they are women; and being women, our natural inheritance is discouragement. "Old or young, rich or poor, life's duties press heavily upon us. Oftentimes we are wearied, not alone in body, but in spirit, and we become listless in will.

There are degrees in weariness, of course, but the strongest of us know enough of the disheartenment and depression of overstrain to sympathize with those weaker than ourselves; and more than that, it oftentimes makes us eager to brighten and cheer others. "How shall I cheer them?" I hear some one ask. Well, I have oftentimes found that the very best plan is to let them talk to you and then just let them know that you care.

More than people comprehend the secret of cheering lies in the fact of caring. An ounce of sincerity is worth a ton of words. For genuine comfort, it is often better to be genuinely sorry and unable to help than be earnestly helpful and unable to care. Genuine sympathy makes the whole nature resourceful. It makes you see what can be done to better trying conditions; it quickens the feet to run on errands of kindness and strengthens the hands for service.

Now life is not all shadows, but worn-out, harassed, worried people can't know how to find the cheer of it. They look so steadily at the shadows and live in the mist that

even the light has an intrusive and unfriendly glare, and cheery things pass them by because they can't seize them as they go. If we can infuse into the hearts of other women, tired women, middle-aged women and young women, the belief that there is comfort, gladness and glory to be gotten out of even harassed and wearied living and show them how to find it, we will do the best thing for womanhood that can be done and the one that means most for our women.

The prize offered sometime ago for the best letter sent to Our Social Chat between September 1st and November 15th, has been awarded to "Minnie," whose article, "The Ambition of Womanhood," appeared in our issue of September 13th. The copy of Webster's International Dictionary offered has been sent to her express office. There were two or three other letters that were close competitors of Minnie's, and it was not easy to reach a decision.

The letters this week are not as numerous as we should like, but they are good. Let us hear from you.

AUNT JENNIE.

Autumn Reflections.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—It is such fine weather Peggy thought perhaps she could jot down a few of her many thoughts, as it is her favorite time of the year. She feels almost young enough to look up that hat with the red and yellow blossoms on it and pass a sly look at the other sex, but a mill never grinds with water that is past. Peggy thinks October and November should be called the dream months, for one can dream the days away. Look at the lovely woods and see the stately trees in their beauty! The woods are dressed in their beautiful fall costume; they have been green so long they are ashamed and have blushed themselves red.

The birds have a low, sweet song they sing to themselves; they know that grim, heartless winter is almost here. The red-breasted robins quarrel in the gum-berry trees; the crow calls to his mate across the field of corn; the whippoorwill is whipping off the meadow with his song.

The wind has sung and moaned in the fall trees, wrestled with the brawny arm of the oak; but finds himself defeated and is gently sighing himself to sleep like a tired child.

The leaves seem to be hurrying down to mother earth, who gently tucks her sleepy ones to bed.

The sun is ashamed of his powerful heat and turned it off, and is lazily sinking his fiery head in the western horizon and smiles as he points his long fingers at us through the tops of the tall trees. What is more beautiful than an autumn sunset?

A few short hours and he will rise to give the morning birth. As the fire burns low, the chirping cricket creeps forth from his home in the wall with his querulous noise. Memories past will come flocking home to your mind; absent faces

and friends are with you; sometime you can catch yourself smiling at one or giving an encouraging nod to something they say. There is many a golden thread woven in with the somber past which makes it bright for your hungry mind to devour. Ghostly shadows commence climbing the walls but you heed not their wiry faces; the past in the master. You can dream on, for I say it is dream time. Peggy often repeats to herself:

"Think not of the past, nor future,
The present is all though past,
The future will soon be the present,
The present will soon be the past."

So don't take on more than you can kick off; we will hardly pass this way again. We "young folks" can't help from feeling rather spry. Peggy thinks she would not mind trying to run and limber up a little and spruce about this keen weather if nobody was in sight; for people will talk you, you know, and if she happened to a little accident it would not be, "Poor Peggy," but "Old cranky Peggy might have known better." But she says knock it off as long as you can. Hoping Aunt Jennie and all the Chatterers are enjoying this bracing weather as she does, I am as ever,

HOMELY PEGGY.

The Love of Home.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—There seems to be a growing disregard for the sacred institution of home among some of our people. In some communities it is considered "old-fashioned" to be "rooted and grounded" in home-love and to be fully devoted to domestic duties.

In view of the many subtle influences which are at work trying to undermine the very foundations of civilization, by destroying the home, we would enter an earnest plea for a revival of that exalted love for the home which characterized our sturdy ancestors.

The truest patriots have always been those whose home-life was of the purest type. Who does not admire the personal characteristic of Abraham Lincoln? Yet it is in his pure and unselfish devotion to his family that we see most to emulate. Think of the great Gladstone's devotion to his home! And there has been no higher tribute paid to our martyred President, McKinley, than that which tells of his beautiful home-life.

It is true that a few characters who had slight regard for home-ties have displayed other noble traits of character, and have attained to a high degree of fame, but it is seldom that the sun of such a life has set in an unclouded sky.

The boys and girls who love and cling to their homes are the ones for whom the future holds her richest store. The woman who gives home her first and best thought, and devotes herself to the happiness and comfort of her family, regardless of all other demands upon her time and strength, is the woman whom future generations will call blessed.

The man who, having established a home of his own, brings all the best affections of his heart and twines them around that home, is the man who is bound to succeed.

"Home! home! sweet home,
There's no place like home!"

MRS. JEMIMA RINGGOLD,
Cumberland Co., N. C.

The Birds' Thanksgiving.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—Thanksgiving Day in our community, I think, proves a curse instead of a blessing in many respects. It puts me more in mind of war times than any day of the year, Christmas not excepted. It's a continual "bang, bang" from early morning to after sun-down, killing and wounding the poor birds, the farmers' best friends. Its a great pity that there is not a law on the statute books in every State that does not now protect the birds from the beginning to the end of every year. This is one of the grand causes why the insects have accumulated in such quantities in every State in the Union. It makes me sorry for the little birds every Thanksgiving Day, not so much for those that are killed outright, but for the great number that are wounded and die a lingering death from wounds and starvation. For their protection, the most of our York and Chester County farmers have posted their lands and allow no hunters on the same. I think it is every man's duty, as a Christian, to protect the harmless birds the best we can. If we should offend some of our most noble friends in so doing, it will prove a blessing to them and their children in the end. If men could see as far before them as they can behind them, they would not destroy their best friends.

Now, Aunt Jennie, in conclusion, I will say that I try to make every day in the year a Thanksgiving Day to the Giver of All Good for what He has done for fallen humanity. To build up His kingdom, I have written two books. The title of one of is "The Path to Heaven" and the title of the other is "A Warning to Travelers." Both of these have ready sale, and both are sermon books.

WM. RILEY HAYES,
Harmony, S. C.

Seasonable Millinery.

The higher-crowned hat is unquestionably the mode of the moment, says The Delineator for November, but there are also shapes that have scarcely any crown and a wide brim that is bent into graceful curves, while the small turban, simply trimmed with braests, pompons or ribbons, is always in vogue.

An interesting feature of the season's styles is the combination of odd shapes and colors. The Directoire hat, in some of its modifications, is beautiful. It may be trimmed up at one side or both, be tipped over the face or flare back, or it may droop all around, or take on the most eccentric curves. Flowers and the gorgeous bird-of-paradise are the trimmings best suited to this type of headgear. The most fashionable of all trimmings is the bird-of-paradise, which lends itself to the most exquisite gradations of color. Shaded plumes—the short Prince of Wales tips—are a modish hat trimming, as are also large quills, which are shown in the richest hues. Huge roses with loose petals trim most attractively.