Christmas Gifts of Money.

"If, after thinking for a long time, you cannot decide what she (my poor girl friend) would like best," writes Ruth Ashmore, in advising girls as to their Christmas-giving in the December Ladies' Home Journal, "and you know well enough to leave to her the choice of the gift, then send her the money that she may spend it for herself. But make this money look more like a chosen gift, and less like that which is so hardly earned by her; trouble yourself to go to the bank and put it in gold, or at least in a new banknote, and inclose it in a tiny little purse."

To Change Cotton.

A new method has been devised for "animalizing" cotton—that is for giving it the character of animal fiber, so that it can be dyed by the processes that are used for wool. Heretofore this has been accomplished by impregnating the material with albumin or casein; but in the new process the cotton fiber receiver a thin coating of wool. In preparing the bath for this purpose a small quantity of wool is first dissolved by boiling with barium hydrate. The barium is then removed by carbonic acid gas, and a little formaldehyde is added. The cotton cloth is wetted with the solution so prepared after which it is dried, steamed and washed. It can then be dried directly with any acid or basic dye, although the colors obtained are not so fast as on wool.

Hope for the Dull Ones.

Dullness is not always an evidence of a lack of brains. Parents should not be discouraged because their children are not always as bright as those of their neighbors. When Isaac Barrow was a boy he appeared so stupid that his father said, if God took away any of his children he hoped it would be Isaac. Yet that boy lived to be one of the greatest divines of the Church of England. Douglas Jerrould was also a dull boy, and Napoleon's teacher said he would need a gimlet to put learning into the head of the future conqueror of Europe. Sir Walter Scott, Chatterton and many others were notably dull boys.

To Purify the Cistern.

If you suspect that the cistern water is foul, suspend in it by a rope a muslin bag containing three or four pounds of charcoal, and it will become pure in a few days. Bake the charcoal and you can use it the same way again. To keep out the charcoal, toss into the cistern one ounce of permanganate of potassa. All the refuse will settle to the bottom and the water become clear and odorless.—Washington Evening Star.

An average sized cocoanut produces a pint of milk.

The largest kitchen in the world is that of the Bon Marche, in Paris.

A Little Mistake.

That doctors commit mistakes is not generally known, although cases from time to time find their way into the newspapers. Dr. Carpenter, who may be said to have introduced the scientific study of human physiology into England, burned himself to death while attempting to take a Turkish bath in his own room by enveloping himself in a blanket and sitting over a spirit lamp. However, when a man poisons himself it is his own peculiar business which is involved, but when he takes to poisoning others, not with malicious intent, but simply in error, a natural apprehension may well pervade the public mind. Protection in the matter is extremely simple, as the following narrative will show:

About eight o'clock on a June evening a victoria, drawn by a pair of high-stepping bay horses, drove up to a celebrated chemist's shop in Bond street, and an elegantly-dressed lady of about 25 years of age descended from the carriage. She walked hurriedly through the shop into the dispensing department and, throwing a piece of paper on the counter, said:

"Please make up this prescription, and send it at once. I would wait and take it myself, but I am just going out to dinner. It is very important."

The assistant bowed, took up the prescription, and then seemed to hesitate.

"Well," said the lady, who seemed of a highly nervous, irritable disposition, "well, what is the matter?"

"I am afraid, madam," said the assistant, "that I cannot dispense this prescription."

"Oh, nonsense," replied the lady. "That is what they said at ——— in Mayfair, so I brought it on here. I suppose Dr. Blank knows what he prescribes."

"Doubtless, madam; but, although Dr. Blank is one of the most eminent in his profession, I dare not make up this prescription, as the strength at which the drug is here ordered is not allowed by the British pharmacopoeia."

"Oh, nonsense!" repeated the lady, commencing to patter on the floor with her small foot. "This is monstrous. Here is my husband waiting for medicine of the utmost importance to his condition, and two chemists' assistants think they know better what is good for him than one of the leading men of the College of Physicians. Give me the prescription and I will get it prepared elsewhere."

"If you will allow me, madam," he said, "I will take a cab to Dr. Blank's and if he confirms the prescription I will then prepare it."

"No, I will not," returned the lady, who was now in a state of nervous irritation. "I will not. My husband is in a serious condition, and I shall be late for dinner. I have already lost half an hour and I cannot have further delay." With that she snatched up the prescription and hurried out.

The assistant was seriously perturbed. The mistake in the prescription was a grave one—so grave, indeed, that the administration of a single dose would probably prove fatal in two hours. It was possible that some young or inexperienced assistant at some small chemist's, overawed by the great name of the physician and by the lady's imperious manner and elegant attire and equipage, would be found to dispense it. Then trouble would ensue which might be stopped now. Thinking thus, the assistant told his fellow worker in the dispensary that he would go to Dr. Blank's, and, hurrying into Bond street, jumped into the first passing hansom, and in five minutes was ringing the bell of the doctor's house in Harley street. The footman who opened the door said Dr. Blank was out.

"Where was he?"

Really, the footman did not know. "Very important, was it?"

Ah! Well, then, he (the footman) must inquire. This he leisurely proceeded to do. And the chemist's assistant, who was of an imaginative turn, amused himself by picturing meanwhile the death of the patient; the professional ruin of himself, the Mayfair chemist and the great physician; the grief and self-reproach of the lady, who, despite her wayward, irritable and careless demeanor, was evidently fond of her husband. And he had already arrived at the coroner's jury verdict of manslaughter when the footman returned with the intelligence that his master was dining with Maida Vale. The cab soon whirled the errant knight of the pestle and mortar into the Edgeware road and drew up at one of the large houses which lie at the right hand side of Maida Vale immediately after passing the canal. Dinner was evidently in full progress, and the footman showed the assistant into an ante-room with no very good grace. Here another wait occurred, which preyed on the already irritated nerves of our friend even more than the previous one at Harley street. At last the door opened, and the doctor entered. He was a dapper little man, about 5 feet 5 in height, with a pale, thin face, and hair and mustache the color of tow. His clear, steel blue gray eyes saved his appearance from being insignificant. He looked inquiringly at the assistant, who, bowing, said:

"I am a dispenser, sir, at Messrs. ———. At about 3 o'clock this evening a lady, Mrs. ———, presented a prescription, signed by you, in which potassi arsenica was ordered in three-dram doses."

"Good God!" cried the physician. "Is it possible?"

"There can be no doubt of it," replied the assistant, "as the prescription was refused by another chemist."

The doctor walked hurriedly up and down the room.

"Can it have been altered?" he muttered.

"I looked carefully for that; but there was not the slightest sign of an erasure. No, sir," continued the assistant, "I am afraid it is a little mistake on your part. I only fear that it may be made up and administered, and I therefore went at once to your house, and, learning where you were, came on here."

"Quite right, quite right," said the doctor. "Have you a cab waiting? That's well. I'll go with you at once to the patient."

It took but a few minutes for the doctor to make his excuses and return ready for departure, and the cab, once more in motion, turned toward the neighborhood of Eton Square. The house at which it now pulled up betokened far greater wealth than either of the other two at which it had stopped since chartered in Bond street; but an air of quietude peculiar to residences in which lie invalids in a very critical condition, pervaded the place. The street door was opened noiselessly by a footman before the occupants of the cab were fairly on the doorstep, and the doctor was shown into a room on the ground floor which answered the purposes of a library, as much as such rooms usually do in London houses.

"Send me Nurse Moore," said the doctor.

"Nurse Moore is out for exercise," replied the footman. "Nurse Norris is on duty; I happen to know, for she took the new medicine which I carried up not five minutes ago."

Dr. Blank was a little man, and little men are usually quick in their motions. But never did man, little or big, fly up the stairs at the same rate as he did before the last words were out of the footman's mouth. The assistant followed, but had only reached the first floor when the doctor entered the bed room on the second. Nurse Norris was standing by the bed measuring a dose of medicine from a bottle. She was a tall, dark young woman of twenty-five, very pleasant-looking, and apparently pursuing her vocation with care, as she did not even look up when the doctor entered.

"None of that, nurse!" exclaimed the doctor.

"I beg pardon, sir," said the nurse, now aroused at the sense of some incongruity in the physician's manner, which became intensified when a strange young man very much out of breath, almost fell into the room from the passage.

"I should say. How is the patient? A very warm night, and likely to render him very uncomfortable," continued the doctor, with his soul in his eyes and his eyes on the bottle.

"I think I am a little better, doctor," said a weak voice from the bed, on which lay a man of about thirty, with the peculiarly emaciated and drawn look which invariably follows a prolonged or very severe illness; "a little easier."

"That's right," said the doctor, feeling the invalid's pulse, "that's right. Yes, a marked improvement." Then, having completed a rather lengthy examination, he turned to the nurse. "A decided improvement, nurse. For tonight we will discontinue all drugs. Give nothing except his usual nourishment until I come again. Dr. W——— will return to-morrow, and when we have a local practitioner once more in attendance you will take your instructions from him. In the meantime, give no medicine. Indeed, I will take it with me." And, without noticing the hurt and resentful look of the nurse, the doctor pounced on the bottle and transferred it to his coat pocket.

On that particular June evening the assistant at Messrs. ——— had been gravely cogitating whether he would be justified in wedding the girl of his choice, who was too delicate to be able to add to the common purse, on a salary of $500 a year, and had decided in the negative. Six months after a quiet but very happy wedding party returned to a very flourishing chemist's shop in the neighborhood of Cavendish Square, which bore the name of the assistant over its front as its proprietor. And if you have ever occasion to consult the great physician, you may be sure that, whatsoever his opinion of your case may be, he will add, as he hands you your prescription: "Be sure you have it made up at a good chemist's, Mr. ——— is an extremely careful dispenser, and in addition, personally analyzes every drug which goes into his place. Thank you. Good morning."—Chambers' Journal.

Electricity in the Navy.

Lieut. Emile Duboc tells an amusing story of an event which, he says, certainly led to the downfall of hydraulic machinery in the French service. A few years ago the authorities of a great ship building firm were very much perturbed when the trials for turning the turrets of a new battleship, in the presence of the committee appointed to take over the ship, were failures. A day or two before everything had gone satisfactorily. But now the turret, after some slight movements, stuck fast. The gauges indicated the normal pressure; there was nothing wrong with the turret or with the racks for rotating it; there was no perceptible leak in any of the pipes; and it was so impossible to assign any reason for the behavior of the turret that the committee had to go home without seeing it revolve. That evening and the following day a complete overhaul was made of the system of piping, and it was then discovered that one small but important pipe was completely choked by a "quid" of chewed tobacco which a workman had doubtless let fall into it inadvertantly. When this was removed the turret worked as well as ever; but the disquietude caused by the want of success of the day before was only increased when it was discovered how insignificant the cause had been. From that day the naval authorities decided that in future wherever practicable the power for battleship operations should be carried by a wire instead of a steam pipe.

A Dessert.

Ike preserved ginger is made from gelatine, dates, almonds and ginger. Put

A delicious dessert for those who a fonth of a box of gelatine in a cup half full of milk, and soak twenty-five or thirty minutes; then dissolve by standing over the teakettle. Add to it fourfour ounces of powdered sugar. Have ready a pint of cream that has been whipped, and mix with it carefully and lightly two tablespoonfuls of preserved ginger, chopped fine, and two tablespoonfuls of the ginger syrup. Chop half a dozen dates as fine as possible and add to the cream; then add the strained jelly. Stir the mixture until it begins to thicken; then pour into a mold. Serve on a low, flat dish, and powder the top with almonds chopped very fine. If you wish the dish to look pretty, garnish with small flowers or green leaves.

PERFECT X RAYS.

Photographs Taken Through an Iron Plate Twenty-Two Centimeters Thick.

When Prof. Roentgen discovered the X rays, or rather made known to the world the wonderful fact that by their means objects can be photographed through solid substances, the general opinion, except among optimistic scientists, was that the acme of achievement in this direction had been attained. Those who hoped for a still greater wonder pointed to the fact that the X rays, while passing readily through other substances, find it impossible to pass through metallic substances, and thus are to a certain extent imperfect. In other words, they maintained that since the sphere of the X rays are limited there must be some method supplying the deficiency, and that it is only reasonable to suppose that in course of time scientists will discover this secret also.

According to the European papers this secret has now been discovered. The story of the discovery was first whispered in Vienna a few days ago; thence it spread to Paris, and now it is known everywhere. Prof. Donnenn de Syke is the name of the fortunate discoverer. He is an Austrian scientist and an indefatigable investigator. Hitherto his reputation has apparently been rather local than European, but all who know him maintain that as an investigator he is entitled to a place in the first rank.

The exact nature of Prof. Syke's discovery has not been divulged. What he has discovered we know; how he discovered it or how he uses his discovery we do not know. The clearest statement regarding the matter appears in a French journal. It says: "Prof. Syke has discovered a system of radiations by means of which photographs can be taken through all substances, even metallic ones. We are told that by the use of these new rays he has taken fifty photographs through an iron plate twenty-two centimeters in thickness. What objects he has photographed or how these new rays are produced we do not know. The Austrian journal which tells of the discovery is silent as regards these interesting points. Yet there is no reason why we should hesitate to believe this story. We have learned from the discovery of the Roentgen rays not to pass a rash judgment in such matters, since experience shows us that even those discoveries which appear to us the most improbable are precisely those which are often made by modern investigators."

There is naturally a good deal of speculation as to the nature of these new rays. According to an authority, "they are far more powerful and magical than the Roentgen rays and will certainly take precedence over them in all practical work." This is only natural. The Roentgen rays can penetrate many substances, but cannot penetrate metals. These new rays, we are told, can penetrate all substances, including metals. Thickness, too, does not seem to act as a barrier in their case, if we may judge from the announcement that photographs have been taken through a comparatively thick plate of iron. In this connection it seems rather curious that no mention has as yet been made of tests with any other metal than iron. Some scientists, indeed, claim that rays which will pass through iron will pass through any other metal; but others, who know how different is the composition of the various metals ,are inclined to be skeptical on this point.—New York Herald.

The Terrible Alaska Mosquito.

Some of the men who have gone to Alaska have returned to complain of the hard work, of the cold, the heat, the frost or the snow, but the real discouragement which makes life in the far North a great burden is the deadly mosquito, from whose insinuating bill there is no escape.

"They are there in such swarms that sometimes you seem to be looking at the sun through a snow storm," said H. A. Fredericks of this city yesterday. Mr. Fredericks has just returned from a long trip in the Yukon country, and it was to that region he had particular reference.

"They are the worst thing in the country," he continued, " and beside them the other difficulties amount to nothing. At the settlements they do not bother the people much, but when a man goes up one of the creeks prospecting he must envelop his head in a mosquito frame of cheese cloth—their bills would go through netting like a knife through tissue paper—and must wear gloves and tie his trousers and shirt sleeves close about his ankles and wrist."—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

A Cat Wears Glasses.

Max, the handsome Maltese pet of Miss Thompson of this city is perhaps the only cat on record that wears spectacles.

Miss Thompson says she has owned Max since her early youth, and has found him a most invaluable possession, besides being a loving little companion in her loneliness. A few months ago, much to her distress, Miss Thompson discovered that Max was losing his eyesight, so she carried him to a well known oculist to be treated. At first the man of science refused to make an experiment, scarce knowing how to begin; but at Miss Thompson's suggestion he secured a line and the picture of a mouse, and by holding these alternately and at varying distances before Max, was finally enabled to test his eyes quite thoroughly. After the necessary treatment the doctor fitted Max with a pair of glasses, the gold frames having to be made to order ,of course, and now the big cat looks as wise as the proverbial owl with his double eyes, and Miss Thompson declares is as good as new again. —San Francisco Letter.

Talk about lead-pipe cinches, Morocco's Sultan has the first prize. He is about to marry again, and everyone in Morocco must contribute a wedding present. He doesn't even have to send out invitations to the wedding. It is a pretty measly sort of a Morocco Sultan that doesn't have a dozen or so of wives. If Morocco had newspapers they would all announce the "Terrible Wedding of the Sultan," if they dared.

Advantage of Sleep.

In reply to the question, is it wise for a man to deny himself a few hours' sleep a day to do more work, Tesla, the great electrician, said: "That is a great mistake, I am convinced. A man has just so many hours to be awake and the fewer of these he uses up each day, the more days he will last; that is, the longer he will live. I believe that a man might live 200 years if he would sleep most of the time. That is why negroes often live to advanced old age, because they sleep so much. It is said that Gladstone sleeps seventeen hours each day; that is why his faculties are still unimpaired in spite of his great age. The proper way to economize life is to sleep every moment that it is not necessary or desirable that you should be awake."

Color in House Furnishings.

Even the iron bedsteads have turned green. When combined with brass knobs and rails they look well in rooms of white and green, or pink and green, but not as well as those of white and gold or all of brass. A pretty bedroom furnished in green has wicker chairs of light olive, the bedstead brass and green, and a green dressing table with brass trimmings. The wall paper is a chintz pattern showing green leaves and pink roses on a white background. The chair cushions are covered with cretonne that matches the wall paper.—New York Post.

Monument to a Pig.

Until within the past few months no monuments had ever been erected to the memorry of a pig. The town of Luneberg, Hanover, wished to fill up the blank and at the Hotel de Ville in that town, there is to be seen a kind of mausoleum to the memory of the porcine race. In the interior of the commemorative structure is a costly glass case inclosing a ham still in good preservation. A slab of black marble attracts the eye of the visitor, who finds thereon the following inscription in Latin, engraved in letters of gold: "Passerby, contemplate here the mortal remains of the pig which acquired for itself imperishable glory by the discovery of the salt springs of Luneberg.

He Did Not Obey.

When they told her that the young man whose suit she had rejected the previous evening had hanged himself to the gate post directly he left her, the beautiful girl shrugged her shoulders.

"It isn't my fault," she said, coldly, "I specifically told him he mustn't think of hanging around here any more."

The first year of a president's administration is one of appointments and disappointments.

His Turn.

Willie (crying)—For goodness sake, papa, don't go in the house. Mamma's just thrashed me, and you'll be next!