

"Never mind," hastily interjected Mr. Crowles. "I am perhaps dressed a little too warm for the season."

"Do you use this room as a dining room all the year round?" inquired Mr. Sawyer, fidgeting in his chair.

"Yes, all the year through," returned the minister. "Won't you let me help you to more peas?"

"No, thank you."

"Do let me give you more hot coffee," purred the sweet woman.

"No, thank you, nothing more," said Mr. Sawyer, casting an uneasy glance at the stove which was as fervent as a summer sun. The films of moisture on the window panes were breaking in places into streaky rivulets indicating the departure of the overflow. The water in the kettle bubbled and splashed in its activity. An uncertain, hazy vapor arose from sundry pots and pans on the back of the stove. The minister's dog, which had been snoozing at one side of the furnace, shambled sleepily to his feet; then he went to the door and whined. During pauses in the conversation the low steady humming of fire rushing beneath the stove lid could be heard. Every damper was open. Presently an odor stole out on the stuffy air. Very much like the burning of a rag it was, and with it a dim suggestion of incinerated cookery.

Mr. Crowles drew forth his handkerchief and mopped his brow. His associate, Mr. Sawyer, sniffed and looked about him, breathing deeply. Then with a startled look the minister's wife sprang up, exclaiming:

"Mercy! my biscuits are burning!"

She hurried to the oven door and flung it wide open. An infernal draught of hot air laden with smoke, swept full against the unprotected back of Mr. Crowles. A reserve detachment swooped aside and enveloped Mr. Sawyer. In an instant a thin veil of smoke enveloped the table.

"Oh, dear!" came the voice of the little woman, as she clawed and clutched frantically at something within the oven, "they're ruined."

A blackened mass slid from her hand to the floor, and with it was a small square smoking thing that had once done duty as an iron holder.

"I must have forgotten and left it in the oven when I turned the biscuits," she managed to explain.

Mr. Crowles coughed and passed his hand over his dripping forehead. The upper buttons of his waistcoat were unfastened. He was very warm indeed.

"Shall I open the window?" he asked, half rising.

"Oh, no, please sit still; I can open it easily," she answered. But before doing so she stirred the fire into one final effort. Her face was a study of sweetness and peace as she again seated herself at the table.

When the meal was ended, the minister and his guests executed an almost pell-mell retreat into the cool livingroom. Both Mr. Crowles and Mr. Sawyer bore evidence of the radiating power of the parson's stove. The pride had forsaken Mr. Crowles collar, which now hung dejectedly about his neck. Mr. Sawyer's celluloid survived the torrid atmosphere shining and placid, but his cuffs were sadly wilted and his linen bosom flat and flabby.

Mr. Cummings opened the front door and peered long and earnestly into the great cool outside world, while he whistled softly, "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight."

The following Sabbath morning the minister made this announcement to his congregation:

"The board of trustees authorizes me to state that certain improvements are to be made in the manse, including the erection of a kitchen. This addition has long been needed and will be greatly appreciated by your pastor and his family. And—"

But the minister's wife heard no more. She glanced across the church at Mr. Cummings. He thought he detected the ghost of a wink in her right eye, and rose to the occasion with a squint of his left. The little woman's banner was floating high and triumphant. She laughed like a girl when she told the good news to the frying pan, and declared "There is nothing better than baked trustee except a trustee that needs no baking.—*The Interior.*"

BOILING BY SUN POWER.

Solar heat is being utilized for heating water for various household purposes. The apparatus for this purpose is absurdly simple, merely a sectional boiler of thin blackened copper, exposed on the sunny side of the roof under a glass cover very like a hot-house frame, and suitably piped for supply and demand. An hour's exposure to full sunlight raises the water to a temperature from thirty degrees to sixty degrees Fahrenheit above that of the air, and as the heaters actually in use contain from forty to one hundred and twenty gallons, according to size, there is an ample supply of hot water through the hours of daylight. Solar water heaters of this kind have been installed on the roofs of many houses in southern districts. They work admirably, and even in less favorable places have been found useful.—*Cassier's Magazine.*

THE LIFE OF AN ANT QUEEN.

How long may an ant queen live? In their natural habitat some queens doubtless have short lives; but by reason of the protection afforded them, and the seclusion enforced by the workers, they probably live much longer than other members of the community. Within artificial surroundings they attain a comparatively long life. The oldest emmet queen known to science was one observed under the care of Sir John Lubbock, later Lord Avebury. A number of years ago, during a visit to this distinguished naturalist at his county-seat, High Elms, Kent, the writer for the first time saw this venerable sovereign, living in the ingenious artificial formicary which had been prepared for her. She was then in the prime of life, as it afterward appeared, being seven years old.

In the summer of 1887 Sir John was again visited, this time at his town house in London. After greetings, he was asked about his royal pet.

"I have sad news to tell you," he answered.

"What? Is the queen dead?"

"She died only yesterday. I have not had the heart to tell the news as yet even to my wife."

Having offered my hearty condolence, I asked to see the dead queen. Sir John led the way to the room where his artificial nests were kept. The glass case which contained the special formicary in which the old ant had lived was opened up. Lying in one of the larger open spaces or rooms was the dead queen. She was surrounded by a crowd of workers, who were tenderly licking, touching her with antennae, and

making other demonstrations as if soliciting her attention, or desiring to wake her out of sleep. Poor, dumb, loving, faithful creatures! There was no response. Their queen mother lay motionless beneath their demonstrations.

"They do not appear to have discovered that she is really dead," remarked Sir John. Afterward he wrote me of another queen which died at the age of fourteen. The ants dragged her body about with them when they moved until it fell to pieces.—*H. C. McCook, in Harper's Magazine for June.*

THE PRICE OF MANHOOD

Into one of our college communities there came, last commencement, an old man of splendid presence and fine oratorical gifts. The boys, in their parlance, "went wild" over him. There was but one sentiment among them, "That's the man I want to be like."

"Boys," said an old professor, "that's a fine ambition; there isn't a nobler man in the State than Judge R——. God bless him! But before you make up your minds to be just like him, let us count up the cost."

Then the professor told his eager listeners something of the private history of their hero from boyhood up; of privations, of thwartings, of misunderstandings, of losses, of crosses, of disappointments, aye, and of failures, all of which had gone to make up their man.

"You may be sure," he said, "God needed every one of these strokes; he never wastes workmanship. Are you willing to pay this price for noble manhood?" and the young hero-worshippers scattered, each hoping to receive his knighthood, even at such cost, but making no more noisy demonstrations about it.

It is for you to desire the best gifts—you who stand at life's threshold; but remember that precious things are also costly. Hold yourselves ready, then, to pay the price of being strong, tender, successful, of being what includes them all, useful.

Your Master says to each one who desires to reign with him, "Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink of?" and as that cup is offered to your lips, may he grant you grace to say in humility and faith, "Master, by thy help we are able."—*Forward.*

FAITH AND SIGHT

"What shall I do with this sorrow that God has sent me?"

"Take it up and bear it, and get strength and a blessing out of it."

"Ah, if I only knew what blessings there were in it; if I saw how it would help me, then I could bear it like a plume!"

"What shall I do with this hard, hateful duty Christ has laid right in my way?"

"Do it; and grow by doing it."

"Ah, yes; if I could only see that it would make me grow!"

In both these cases, do you not see that what you are begging for is not more faith, although you think it is, but sight? Faith says not, "I see that it is good for me, and so God must have sent it," but "God sent it, and so it must be good for me."—*Phillips Brooks.*

A good tonic of salt water for the hair should contain a teaspoonful of salt to a tumbler of water, and should be applied to the hair two or three times a week.

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WORTH TEN SERMONS.—An old clergyman was in the habit, as soon as he got into the pulpit, of placing his sermon in a crevice under the cushion, where he left it during the singing of the accustomed Psalm. One Sunday morning he pushed the sermon-book too far into the crevice, and lost it. When the Psalm was concluded he took up the Bible, opened it, and thus addressed the congregation:

"My brethren, I have lost my sermon, but I will read you a chapter of Job worth ten of it."

A clock can run, but cannot walk;
My shoe has a tongue, but cannot talk;
A comb has teeth, but has no mouth;
A north wind blows the smoke straight south.

Bottles have necks, but have no heads;
And pins have heads but have no necks;
And needles have to hold their threads
Right in their eyes—how it must vex!

If I were a needle, comb or shoe,
I never should know just what to do;
My head is really in a whirl,
I'm glad I am a little girl.

Why will you allow a cough to lacerate your throat or lungs and run the risk of filling a consumptive's grave, when, by the timely use of Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup the pain can be allayed and the danger avoided. This Syrup is pleasant to the taste, and unsurpassed for relieving, healing and curing all affections of the throat and lungs, coughs, colds, bronchitis, etc., etc.

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