

"ASTRA" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

[Correspondents seeking information in this department should address their queries to "Astra," Progress, St. John.]

The time is so short before Christmas now, girls, that I shall not have another opportunity of wishing you a merry Christmas, as the great festival will have passed before you see PROGRESS again; so I will wish you now the very happiest of Christmas's! May you all get the very presents you wanted most, and may everybody to whom you have given a present be delighted with it, and may you not forget those who are poorer than yourselves. Don't give your best gifts to those of your friends who are the best off, some simple remembrance will be just as welcome to them, and they have the wherewithal to buy every luxury for themselves. So try and give something as good as you can afford, to those who have not many pleasures, or luxuries, and I think you will spend a happier holiday season, for the memory of the pleasure you have given.

WINTER, St. John.—I hope you read my little article on Christmas presents, in last week's PROGRESS. I meant it as an answer to you and all the other girls who have asked me to give them suggestions about presents, as it was the readiest way of answering you, and saved you from waiting so long for your answers. (1) I do not think you could make a collar and cuff box. I know I could not, but I hope some of my other suggestions may be useful to you. (2) If you know the young man well enough ask him for the photograph, as it is not likely he would offer it without some suggestion from you, but if he is a stranger I should not say anything about it. (3) I do not know of any fortune teller in St. John except "Professor" Hunter, and I heard him tell one of my friends her fortune, when we were both younger and more silly than we are now. He promised her a dollar if she was married in seven months. That was seven years ago, and she is not married yet; worse still, he never gave her the dollar. So you see my faith in fortune tellers is not strong. I have known of very strange things in the shape of fortune telling, but yet I cannot bring myself to believe that it is given to man to look into futurity, and a blessed thing it is for us that it has been so ordained. (4) I should write him a decided note, demanding its immediate return, and, saying that if he failed to respond at once, I should feel obliged to tell my father. I think you will find that will have the desired effect. Thank you, Geoffrey and the pup are quite well now. You did not ask many questions at all.

BLUE EYES, Moncton.—I am glad you made up your mind at last. Thank you for the compliment. (1) No, I am not at all glad winter is coming. I hate winter and all connected with it, and I am always sorry when it comes. If you coughed your head nearly off, all winter as I do, I don't believe you would either. (2) The pup is a good deal like Mary's celebrated lamb, and follows me about wherever I go; the height of his ambition is to come to church, but he has not attained it yet. (3) My own hair is dark, so of course, I admire fair hair; you know it is so much more rare than dark. (4) I cannot remember the meaning of the name just now, but I will look it up for you. (5) No; I am very certain I cannot tell you either who you are, or what your age is. I have something else to do besides speculating about the age or identity of my correspondents. I will kiss the cat with pleasure, for you, and I think I had better give the pup a doughnut instead of the love, because it would appeal to his feelings much more. Like his mistress, he loves doughnuts, and that will leave the more love for me, two pecks at least.

DEBUTANTE, St. John.—I am very sorry I could not answer you sooner, but there are letters now waiting in the office that I received before yours. Whether you accepted the invitation or not, you must call, and it should not be later than a week after the party, if possible. Whenever you receive any invitation, you should not only answer it, but always call afterwards. You must not be discouraged by this late answer, and think too long a time has passed for you to call now; go at once, and make some excuse for your delay.

A SCHOOL BOY.—I have kept you a long time waiting for your answer, I know, but not longer than many others, and we must all take our turn in this world, by the way—I wonder when my turn is coming? Your writing is all right, but I think I should use a pen with a broader nib; you will find that your hand will change a good deal between now and the time you are 21. Men generally use thicker paper; foreign post is almost always used by ladies, and you must never write on both sides of the paper when writing to a newspaper. The last three letters of my name are "tra," and I live, move, and have my being in PROGRESS office. You are not at all lacking in nerve, are you, School Boy? Is there any more reason why I should tell you my name and address than that you should tell me yours? Yes, you can be "in it" if you like; the boys are always welcome, especially when they write as nicely as you do. I do get worried sometimes, when I get foolish or impertinent letters; but that does not happen often, and I am sorry to say the impertinent ones nearly always come from your sex. I am glad you think there is no place like home—Canada. I do, too, and I am not a Canadian; only a stranger and pilgrim. Some of the letters in the paper you refer to were very silly, I thought, and others were good. The colors you mention would be pretty if the blue was very dark, and the lavender very pale. It would be perfectly correct for you to ask the young lady for her photograph. Please don't insult the pup by calling him a pug; he is a spaniel, and a very handsome one, too. You say "if he is, give him my love;" is what? "Faithfully yours" and "sincerely yours" are both more frequently used, and I think they sound better.

PORTIA, St. John.—I really think you had better avoid him, and give up thinking about him if possible, because if he really cared about you, even a little, he would be only too glad to go and see you. His frequent visits to another girl show very plainly that he does not think of you at all. I should not take the slightest notice of him, there is nothing you can do except ignore him, but do not call him a gentleman, for he is not one. My "family" and I, both thank you for the love.

EVANGELINE, St. John.—You cannot do anything at all, for unless you are engaged, you could scarcely ask him to see you

home, but I suppose, in an extreme case, you could fall back on a hint, though it would be very awkward if he paid you back in your own coin, by refusing to take it. Men don't like being made conveniences of, you know.

GIROULE.—The situation you describe would be a decidedly strained one, I should think and the best way out of the difficulty would be for one, or other, of the visitors to have a pressing engagement for half-past eight, and take his departure. He won't do it, all the same, he will wait to see the other fellow safely off the premises, and the other fellow will do the same, so the chances are that you will have a prolonged siege of them both. (2) I think 20 quite young enough, but I suppose it is a matter of taste. (3) I do not know, I am sure; I suppose simply because they are men, and also because most of the unpleasant remarks made about girls are made by men, so they could not very well turn around and abuse each other. Never mind! we don't stand in groups on the corners, smoke cigarettes, and make remarks about the male passers-by; we keep on the move usually. (4) I really think you must be mistaken, it is an inflexible rule with every respectable photographer never to sell any photographs except those of public characters. Nothing will induce them to break through this rule, and if they did they would soon lose their customers; and very properly, because there would be no safeguard for the public, if it were not so. (5) You should never have taken the ring. No girl should accept a valuable present from a man who is not either engaged to her, or a relation, and especially a ring. Never mind what he thinks, send it back to him at once, and tell him you think you did wrong in accepting it, and your conscience will not allow you to keep it. (6) The lady should make the first move, as it would be rather humiliating for her to feel that she had seemed so reluctant to part from him that he had to say good night first. (7) Moles are considered beauty spots.

MARIE N., North End.—I am sorry to say that I cannot tell you where you could procure an authentic portrait of Marv, Queen of Scots. I am afraid it would be very difficult to obtain. I have seen several pictures of her, but they all differed. Perhaps some of our correspondents who are always so kind about helping us, could offer some suggestion about it. I have always had a great admiration for the beautiful and unfortunate queen, and a thorough loathing for her ill-tempered, jealous, cruel cousin, misnamed "Good Queen Bess," who was just as bad herself as she dared to be, and who hated Mary for her beauty and charm, and seized the first opportunity that offered of getting rid of her.

JESS, Nova Scotia.—Que is French for what, as—*que rouler-vous?* what do you want? but I really think you must have misquoted the second word, as there is no such word in the French language, at least, if there is, I never saw it. Do you think it could be *Qu'est-ce que c'est*. What is it?

X. Y. Z., Fredericton.—Of course it would be perfectly proper to send him a present! Indeed I think it would seem very strange if you did not. Send him just as nice a one as you can afford. Thank you very much for the suggestion about curling the hair. I will remember it the next time anyone asks for information.

VENUS.—I think it would be the very best thing you could do to postpone your marriage for a while, say a year. I was so glad to hear from you again, and I read your letter very carefully and as the young man seems to be good and true, and is so fond of you, your prospects for happiness should be of the brightest, but for the one fact, that you do not love him well enough to marry him. Perhaps the love may come in time, and it so it is well worth waiting for. I really do not see why you should not love him as long as there is no one else in the way, for of course the other cannot be called a love affair.

BRUNO, St. John.—You are very kind to give me such a pleasant title, so of course I must try to deserve it. So you are "a poor lonely man," well, surely that must be your own fault, since you have the privilege of doing the asking, and there are such "lots of good fish in the sea," but remember you must not expect the girls to always meet you half way, some of them are really very shy, more so than men, and so, do not be too easily discouraged. Do you know, a girl does not always like to ask a man to call again lest he should think she was too anxious to see him. Suppose you try calling on your friend once more, and if you think she is really not cordial to you, then you can turn your attention elsewhere, and probably have better luck, but again I say don't be discouraged. Geoffrey does that quite frequently as it is, but I daresay he will not object to an extra one, once in a while. I really don't think you could, my friend. Let me know how you succeed.

MYSELF, St. John.—You are quite sure about it, are you my friend because if you should turn out to be Somebody Else, or even another person, it might make some confusion. For your kind words about this department I thank you very heartily, and I will join you in the wish that a masculine Astra could rise up and start a corner for "Talks with Boys." (1) You want to know "how and where the Washington pie originated," and whether it is intended to suggest the use of a hatchet in dissecting it? My dear boy where did you go to school. Surely you must have heard that the stump of George Washington's original cherry tree was so improved by the pruning it received that it sprouted from the roots, and bore a choice quality of cherries, which George's mother used to make into pies. She was a notable housewife, and George's boyish request, "Make a pie off of my tree for dinner today ma" never failed to win a response. There was a beautiful superstition current in the Washington family that the said tree having grown up again proved that "truth crushed to earth shall rise again" since the "tree grew so much better after George told the truth about it, and it became a sort of family joke, that whoever ate those famous cherry pies always had to tell the truth afterwards whether they wanted to or not, like George himself they simply could not tell a lie. And so they came to be called George Washington pies, but after a while the George was dropped, and they were simply known as Washington pies. George's mother is also supposed to have written the beautiful ballad, "Can

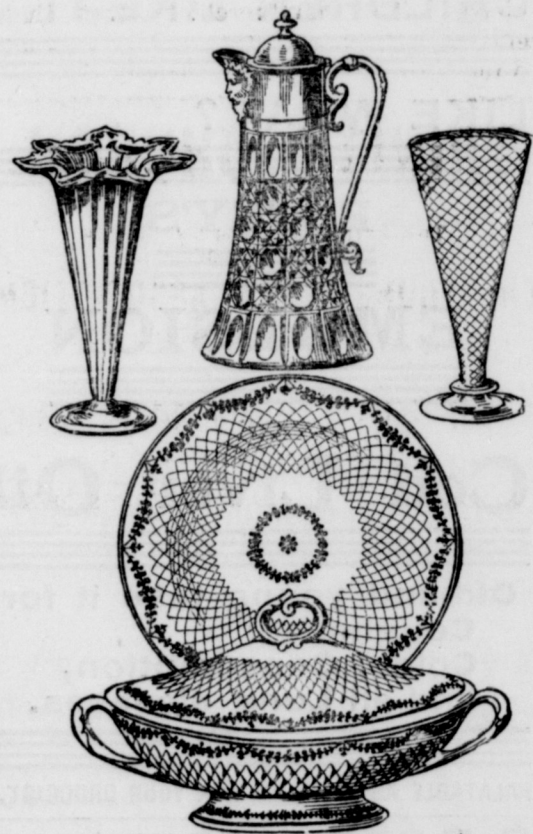
she make a cherry pie, Billy, boy," as she had always declared that no girl should ever be a daughter-in-law of hers who could not make a good cherry pie. Now, "Myself," I have answered your first question, answered it amply, I think, and I am going to pass over the other eight in order to give a little bit of friendly advice. If you think that a busy newspaper woman has nothing better to do than waste her precious time in answering every young donkey whose own time hangs so heavily on his hands that he has no better employment than to sit down and compose nine of the silliest questions—with a very strong vein of vulgarity running through them—that I ever read, you are greatly mistaken. I am here to answer questions and give advice to young ladies, who wish to consult me, and I never object to taking any trouble for a gentleman, whether he wears overalls, like a valued correspondent of mine in British Columbia, who is engineer on a steamer out there, or whether he wears the best Scotch tweed when he is at work, and wields a pen as the implement with which he carves out his fortune, as some of my other correspondents do, but I have no idea of wasting time, which rightfully belongs to my girls on you, and I merely answered your first question to show the girls how much more silly a man can be when he tries, than a girl can ever hope to be. I only wish I had space to publish your whole letter, perhaps I shall have, some day, and then won't the girls laugh? By the way I will answer your last question, "Do you ever weary answering questions?" Questions like yours, "myself," yes, I weary at once. Good bye for the present my friend, I think fish would be very good for you, plenty of fish, you know.

LUCILLE, Nova Scotia.—I am glad you were pleased with your answer; thank you for all the kind things you say. I am sure I should like to meet you very much. You say you wonder I can keep up the interest I do in my correspondents. Well, a letter like yours, once in a while, is a great help towards it, for you know we all like our efforts to be appreciated; even literary people find a little encouragement a great comfort, and the girls are very good indeed in that way. I think you only asked me one question. No, "the one referred to" is a girl, the other was, I think, "Wanderer"—do you understand? It is the only direct question you asked. I quite understand about the curious people, and also about the cutting down; the latter is one of those things literary people have to get used to, but it is annoying at first. I think you are quite sure of the remuneration. It does teach us a lot of lessons, does it not? Nothing else can quite compare with it in that way. Write again some time; I shall always be glad to hear from you. ASTRA.

IN GLASS AND GOLD.

Some of the Very Newest Novelties of the Christmas Season.

A great novelty this season is the gold lace ware used for cracker boats, fruit dishes and so on. It is of gold filigree as fine and shiny and floriated as real lace. Inside the gold comes a movable dish of plain, clear glass, to which the gold is accurately fitted. The handsomest and costliest table glass is pure white flint glass cut on a plain surface and overlaid with golden



flowers, leaves and scrolls. Tall flower holders like those pictured, are set sparingly about and filled, not crowded, with big, long-stemmed flowers—often than not American—Beauty roses three feet from tip to toe.

Sometimes the holder is all glass. Sometimes it rises out of a golden base, upheld by golden arms. Sometimes, too, it is of the richest Venetian red. In all forms it costs a pretty penny—and has been bought several thousand times over for fortunes spoiled and favorite children.

She Breaks in Shoes.

"Wearing shoes is my business," said a woman the other day. It began in this way: A schoolmate of mine had the good luck to marry a wealthy man. She had always suffered from tender feet, and at school I used to break in her new shoes for her by wearing them a few days. Stretching on a last won't serve the same end, because a last cracks, without softening the leather; there's nothing like the tread of the foot to do that.

"Well, when my friend married she insisted on my accepting from her a trifle for breaking in her shoes. I named fifty cents a pair. There were other women to whom she mentioned her idea, and about half a dozen who wore the same number as I did, gave me their custom. Gradually my queer little business increased, so by the time my daughters grew up I never had to buy shoes for them or myself, and I often employ girls outside when my customers' sizes do not fit any of us.

"I keep the buttons on the shoes in addition to stretching them when new. I charge ten cents for putting the buttons on, no matter how many or how few there may be to replace. I also brush and put shoe polish on them. The charge for this is twenty-five cents, and the shoes are sent to me and called for. For years, I think, I stood alone in the business, but now the visiting maid includes the care of shoes in her duties, so that, but for having my own patronesses, she would cut the ground from under my always new-shod feet.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

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TAKING CARE OF THE TURKEY.

Directions for Preparing the Bird in the Highest Style of Art.

The pride of the epicure is to have the fowl as large as possible and fat. It must be nicely dressed, and then it is ready for treatment. Place in a close covered vessel with enough water to cover entirely, and boil until slightly tender. While it is boiling prepare the dressing as follows: Roast a pint of large chestnuts in their shells, stirring them occasionally so that they may be uniformly toasted. When brown, shell and pound fine in a mortar. Throw into a large bowl and add three stale grated rolls (or that have been softened by steaming and free from lumps), and three corn muffins; one pint fresh oysters, with their liquor; one small onion, shaved fine; two sticks celery, cut fine (or one teaspoonful celery salt), salt, pepper, a sprig of parsley, a pinch of cayenne, three tablespoons of butter and three hard-boiled eggs that have been mashed very fine with a fork. Beat and thoroughly mix, adding water in which the turkey is boiling until the proper consistency, which must be stiff enough to put in with the hands. When the turkey is ready and cooled sufficiently to handle, stuff full and tight, and whatever you have left put in baking pan to make gravy. Bake in water in which it was boiled, basting frequently and gradually turning the fowl entirely over, allowing the breast to brown last. When it is of a beautiful golden brown all over it is done.

The heart, liver and gizzard, after being boiled, should be cut up fine and left in the gravy, half of which should be thickened and yellowed by the yolk of an egg beaten in, and the other half made brown with browned flour, or white with the white of an egg stirred in, and served in a double gravy boat. When the turkey is taken up the dish should be garnished all around with brown fried or steamed oysters and the sliced white rings of hard boiled eggs, while upon the turkey are placed the wheels of yolks out of the slices, and over all sprinkle a dainty touch of green parsley leaves. "Now isn't that a dainty dish to place before a king?"

THE LATEST IN HAIR DRESSING.

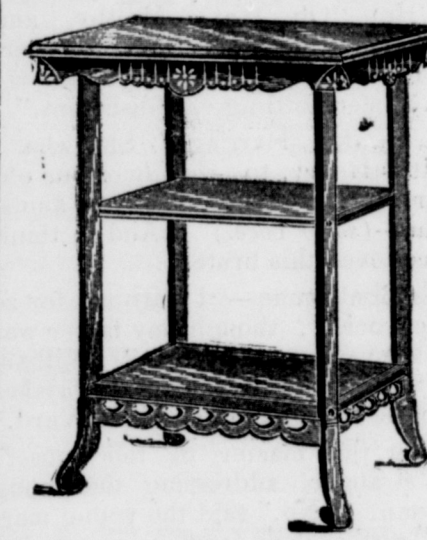
Hair Waved All Over Head the Popular Fancy.

The variety of styles in hair dressing is great enough to suit all faces, but in all the newer ones the hair is waved all over the head and drawn high to the crown. The bang is worn very light—a mere trize of soft curls. Back of it came either pompadour rolls, puffs or waved hair



massed between the forehead and the terminal apex and held in place with fancy pins, ropes of milk pearl or Lucian fillets of tortoise shell enriched with gold silver, in fact ornaments were rarely ever so much worn in the hair. Their name is legion, their shape as varied as their uses. The illustrations show the trend of fashions in hair dressing—which each beholder can adapt to her own taste or features or fancy.

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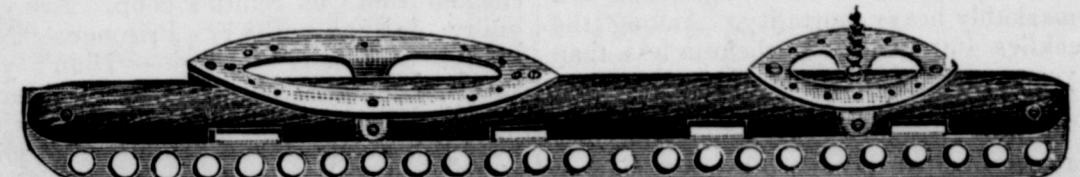
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