

"ASTRA'S" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

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

CARMELLE, St. John.—I cannot help wondering sometimes if the girls ever read this column because I so often answer a query one week and have precisely the same question asked the following week. It is not that I object to repeating my recipes so frequently on account of the little bit of extra trouble it gives me, but I often think if the girls would stop and reflect a moment before they ask me to do so it would save us both a great deal of trouble. In the first place, I should think it would be much easier to pick up the scissors and cut out one of the recipes for freckles which have appeared in this column so often that I am sure they know their way to it blindfold, than it would be to write and ask me to publish it again, because in all probability the writer is obliged to wait a week or two for her answer. And in the second place, I am sure if my correspondents did stop to think a moment they would remember how limited is the space at my disposal, and how often really important letters are delayed for two and three weeks awaiting their turn to appear; and they would hesitate before writing to ask for information which has been published over and over again, in this department. Now, I hope you will not think me disagreeable or be offended at this little lecture. The remedy for freckles which appeared in PROGRESS of November 5th is the best I know, and in case you did not see it I will repeat it. Scrape a tablespoonful of horseradish into a cup of milk, let it stand for a day, and apply to the face on going to bed, wring a sponge or piece of flannel and thoroughly wetting the face with the mixture. Strain off the milk before using. It will keep for some time.

NELLIE, St. John.—There was not the least danger of my publishing your letter, but if you meant the answer to it, I am sorry your card was too late; still I do not think there was any harm done as I wrote very cautiously.

DRIVER, St. John.—I do not think the presence of a young man would make the least difference except that perhaps it might imply the driving to be solely a matter of pleasure. I strongly disapprove of driving on Sunday, for those who are able to drive whenever they like, but you know there are many people who work hard all the week and never have time to enjoy themselves except on Sunday, and for this class I think a drive into the country on a Sunday afternoon or evening is not only harmless but beneficial. You know circumstances alter cases very materially, and what would be very wrong for the man or woman of elegant leisure who has nothing in the world to do but take all the enjoyment possible out of life, is a very different matter for the working bee who spends nine hours a day in the office or the shop, at the sewing machine, or the typewriter, and a drive to one of these workers is the greatest possible treat. That is the best answer I can give you, even with the promise of being a "life long friend" to you if I answer your questions, and I hope you will be satisfied with it and redeem your somewhat rash promise.

MARGIE, St. John.—You are very welcome to this corner of PROGRESS and I will do my best to answer your queries. I don't think it really makes much difference at what age a girl begins to wear her hair "done up," except that the longer she can be a child the better, even if she is "large for her age" at sixteen, but I think a girl of eighteen is a young lady even though she may look younger than her real age, and therefore she looks better with her hair arranged in grown up style. (2). The wearing of glasses has become so common amongst young people, and even children, that they no longer render the wearer conspicuous; indeed they are almost the rule and not the exception now. (3). I would first make very sure that she saw me and that the "cut" was intentional and not accidental, and if satisfied that she deliberately passed me without speaking I would take no further notice of her. (4). If you have been properly introduced to the young man and know him to be a desirable acquaintance, it would be quite proper to invite him to come in and be introduced to your parents, the second or third time, provided it is early in the evening. (5). Not too many questions at all; why there are only four.

AUTUMN, St. John.—How very strange that your letter dated October 17th should turn up now, after all I said to you about having changed your name and my never having received any letter with that signature before. It has been mislaid in some manner for it only reached me on Saturday, and I take back my previous remarks with sincere apologies. I am glad you find my column so interesting, many people of both sexes are kind enough to say the same thing, and I like to know it is appreciated. (1). I scarcely think it would be possible, as I would be sure to detect them in some way; it might be done once or twice but they would be sure to betray themselves, so many write to me without attempting to disguise their sex and they always receive such a cordial welcome, that I do not believe that they would take the trouble to masquerade as girls; you see it would be such a poor joke and no one would be able to enjoy it but themselves. You are not

bound in any way to continue an acquaintance which was not of your making, nor to recognize anyone to whom you did not care to be introduced. Only once or twice since I started this column have I recognized the writers of the letters, and in both those cases the letters were written for the especial purpose of finding out whether I would discover the writer who was a very intimate friend. On the other hand, I have received and answered letters from my nearest friends, people whose writing I should have known as well as my own, and have been perfectly unconscious that I had ever seen it before. One who has so many letters to read as I have gets into the habit of only noticing the matter contained in them, and unless a question is asked about the handwriting I scarcely observe it at all. I used to be very fond of dancing, but I do not care for it at all now, it is much too hard work with too little result in the way of pleasure, for anyone who is not very strong. It is strange, I suppose, to write to a person you have not seen, but still the girls soon get over that feeling and are quite willing to have "a good old talk" on paper, which I enjoy quite as much as they do. You did not give me any trouble at all, and I shall be glad to hear from you at any time.

W. N. C. Halifax.—You are mistaken in supposing that I am Scotch. I have plenty of Scotch blood in my veins but I am English. However I happen to know something about Scotch language so I can give you the information you want. "Pan" is used in two senses by the Scotch, it means a saucepan or milk tin, but also a pail, and that is the meaning in the book you mention, I think. I do not think it a trifle at all, I know how things haunt and worry one until they find the solution. The royal Standard of England is one flag which has the appearance of being divided into four, cut into quarters as it were, each quarter representing one of the four divisions of Great Britain, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The upper left hand square representing England, bears three lions one above the other, the lower left hand square bears the harp of Ireland, the upper right hand quarter has a single rampant lion and represents Wales. I really forgot the colors but I know the standards of both England and Wales are red. I was very glad to hear from you again, you know how much I think of old friends and how I dislike to lose sight of former correspondents. Write again.

FOR MENDING GLOVES.

A Handy Little Basket and What It Is Worth to a Good Housekeeper.

It is well to have a little basket purposely for gloves that have come to mending filled with tan, gray and black silk, or cotton thread, for just lately cotton has come into vogue for glove-mending, many claiming that it is less apt than silk to cut the kid, while it wears off and matches the color more perfectly. So says Good House-keeping.

There should also be in the basket a paper of assorted glove needles, a bit of wax and a box of the tiny buttons which have been saved from worn-out gloves, as well as pieces of gloves of different colors. It is always advisable to buy gloves of the best quality and then to carefully pull them in shape, straightening the fingers before putting them away after wearing; being sure that they are not damp with perspiration, sprinkling the inside with violet powder if there is the least trace of it, otherwise you may find your gloves mildewed, and wonder how they came to be so.

A pair of gloves treated in this way, kept in good repair, with the smallest rip properly mended, will last nearly as long again. The best way to mend buttonholes that have a tendency to stretch or tear is to baste on the inside with a fine needle always—a bit of kid of the color of the gloves. Carefully catch down the edges, stretching both patch and gloves alike, and then securely fasten the buttonholes to it—cutting incisions of the proper size and sewing to the edge of the buttonholes.

If the seams in the back are torn out a piece may be put under and so carefully sewed that it will not show. A worn thumb or forefinger may be patched with a bit of another glove, and thus made to do duty as shopping gloves for some time. Silk, lisle thread or woollen gloves, if taken when first beginning to show wear, can be neatly darned, and are much more serviceable for the everyday purposes of life than cheap kid.

Women in Journalism.

There seems to be a great setting in of the tide of working women toward journalism says the N. Y. Press. It is a little curious that women who have failed in many methods of bread winning should think it easy to write for the newspapers and edit great journals. Possibly the easy style that is in reality the perfection of good journalism seems to require only a ready pen and a moderate fund of general information. Women soon learn their mistake. They learn that absolute correctness, reliability, punctuality, and above all, adaptiveness are absolutely necessary to even moderate success. As to the individual success of women and their compensation nothing very positive can be asserted. Probably there are 500 women in New York not, of course, all connected with daily newspapers, but who earn from \$25 to \$50 weekly with their pen. In no other profession does ability so quickly receive recognition as in journalism. The rarest virtue in a woman writer is the ability to express a great deal in a few words. Rather is she inclined to use a great many words to express little. A flow of language, however eloquent, is not wanted by the modern newspaper.

Sales of English Wives.

In 1877 a wife was sold for £40, and what is more remarkable, the articles of sale were drawn up and signed at a solicitor's office, the money paid and the chattel handed over with all the gravity of law. In the course of a county court case at Sheffield, in May, 1881, a man named Moore stated that he was living with the wife of one of his friends, and that he had purchased her for a quart of beer. During the hearing of a school board case in the course of 1881, at Ripon, a woman informed the Bench that she had been bought for twenty-five shillings, and had assumed the name of the purchaser.—All the year around.

SEASONABLE RECEIPTS.

Specially Prepared from Practical Tests for the Lady Readers of "Progress."

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

Seasonable Food.

Fish.—Oysters, clams, crabs, smelts, cod, haddock, chicken halibut, salmon, haddock, bladders. Meats.—Beef, mutton, pork, veal, sausages, tripe. Poultry and Game.—Turkeys, chickens, fowls, geese, partridge, wild ducks, teal, woodcock, snipe, pigeons, rabbits, moose. Vegetables.—All root vegetables, cabbage, broccoli, parsley, celery, all sorts of sweet herbs. Fruit.—Apples, pears, grapes, figs, nuts, raisins, oranges.

Especially in Season in November.

Oysters, clams, smelts, chicken halibut, bladders, pork, tripe, turkey, keese, partridge, woodcock, wild ducks, rabbits, moose, Jerusalem artichokes, leeks, broccoli, salsify, celery, apples, grapes, figs, nuts of all kinds, raisins, oranges.

About Oatmeal Porridge.

Oatmeal is an article of the first necessity now in every hotel, and is eaten both at breakfast and supper. The rolled oats are much easier to cook than coarse oatmeal. When the latter is used it needs to be soaked over night and then boiled for two hours. The former can be prepared in half an hour without soaking. The best way to make porridge or mush is to boil the water and sprinkle in the meal while stirring with the other hand, and when it boils up again put the lid on the saucepan and set it at the back of the stove or on a brick, to simmer with the steam shut in for two hours. If the bottom should get burned by accident, do not stir it up and make the whole taste burnt, but empty out the unburnt portion into another saucepan by inverting it without the interference of a spoon. A farina boiler is a good thing to make porridge in. The rule of making is 4 cupfuls of water, 1 cupful of oatmeal, large measure, and 1 small teaspoonful of salt. Stir from the bottom occasionally.

Erroneous Ideas About Oatmeal.

The Sanitary Era says: "Oatmeal is popularly supposed to be hygienically impeccable. But it is highly fermentable, and demands a tolerable vigorous and rapid digestion to dispose of it before souring." It gives numerous examples of heartburn caused by an oatmeal diet, which nothing could relieve until that article was banished, and which returned immediately if the use of it was resumed. The American Analyst adds: "No article of diet has been so much misunderstood and misused as oatmeal, and no article of food has so much that really can be laid to its door as a factor of the very troubles it is intended to relieve. No one food that is used in a semi-hygienic and semi-medical sense, causes so much dyspepsia, flatulence and general disturbance. . . . It is not an uncommon occurrence to see invalids gulping down bowlfuls of milk and cream and sugar saturated, or rather holding in suspension their own bulk of oatmeal gruel, under the insane delusion that they are swallowing concentrated bone, muscle and other animal tissues which is to convert them into modern Samsons. . . . It seems never to occur to these misguided invalids that graminivorous animals grind their own grists and well and thoroughly insalivate the mass while they, on the contrary, saturate the already ground mass with sugar, cream and milk, and run it down into their stomach as they find their mouths, jaws, teeth, salivary glands, masticatory muscles, etc., were only the end of some flume with the stomach for a reservoir. It is a mistake to imagine that the brawny Scots or Caledonians of Ossian, existed long before oatmeal was made, and it is silly to try to turn oneself into a brawny Scot by bloating upon oatmeal. It would be as rational to accuse the potato and potheen for the undisputable pugnacity, turbulence and hardness of the modern Hibernians, when we knew full well that the ancient Hibernians or the Hiberni—Sylestris of Bacon, quaffed only saffron tea and feasted on the flesh of the wild boar—which, by the way, was the real exterminator of snakes in Ireland—and of the wild deer that there then abounded."

Those who have followed this far to learn something more about oatmeal, have learned something, perhaps, about "snakes in Ireland" that they did not know before. Whether this statement be true or not matters little to us, but many of us who have been eating oatmeal daily with the idea that it possesses some peculiar hygienic principle, without being benefited thereby, but on the contrary have been distressed with indigestion and flatulency, would do well to take a hint from the above and leave oatmeal alone.

How to Drink Milk.

Some complain, says an exchange, that they cannot drink milk without being "distressed by it." The most common reason why milk is not well borne is due to the fact that people drink it too quickly. If a glass of it is swallowed hastily, it enters the stomach, and there forms in one solid, curdled mass, difficult of digestion. If, on the other hand, the same quantity is sipped, and three minutes at least are occupied in drinking it, then on reaching the stomach it is so divided that when coagulated, as it must be by the gastric juice, while digestion is going on, instead of being in one hard, condensed mass upon the outside of which only the digestive fluids can act, it is more in the form of a sponge, and in and out of the entire bulk the gastric juice can play freely and perform its function.—Medical Review.

Canadian Apple Pudding.

This is a simple pudding, being made with a pint of flour, a cupful of milk, one egg, three tablespoonfuls of butter, one tablespoonful of baking powder, one cupful of sugar, half a cupful of water, two quarts of pared and quartered apples, half a teaspoonful of salt, and about one-fifth of a nutmeg. Put the apples, sugar—less two tablespoonfuls, nutmeg, and water into a deep pudding dish. Place in a moderate oven for twenty minutes. Mix well in a sieve, and then rub through it the flour, baking powder, salt, and the two tablespoonfuls of sugar; add the milk and the egg, well beaten, and stir with a spoon until a smooth dough is formed, then add the butter, melted. Remove the dish from the oven, and spread the batter on top of the apples. Return the pudding to the oven, and after increasing the heat, bake for twenty minutes. At serving time turn the pudding out on a flat dish, having the crust underneath and the apple on top, or it may be served with the crust on top, in the dish in which it was baked. Serve with nutmeg or lemon sauce. A good wholesome pudding for children.

Lemon Sauce.

Mix a tablespoonful of corn-starch with a quarter of a cupful of water. Stir this

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mixture into a cupful of boiling water, and boil it for two minutes; then add the juice and rind of a lemon and a cupful of sugar, and cook three minutes longer. Beat up an egg until it is very light, and pour the boiling mixture over it. Return to the fire and cook a minute longer, stirring all the while.

Nutmeg Sauce.

Is substantially the same, leaving out the lemon and the egg, but adding a fourth of a teaspoonful of salt, one-third of a grated nutmeg, and after simmering for half an hour adding two table-spoonfuls of butter. Strain and serve hot.

How to Stone Raisins.

Put them into a bowl, cover them with boiling water and let them stand for two minutes. Pour off the water, free the raisins from stems, open them, and the seeds can be removed quickly and easily without the usual stickiness.

Tempting Dishes for the Sick.

ROASTED OYSTERS.—Take half a dozen or more medium sized oysters in the shell, wash all the mud off and put them into a pan with the deep shell (the roundest side) down. Place in a hot oven, and as soon as the shells begin to open take them from the oven, remove the upper shells, detach the oyster from the lower shells with the blade of a common knife, season lightly with pepper, salt and a little butter, and serve on the shells in their own liquor quickly before they get cold.

EGG TEA.—Beat the white of an egg to a stiff froth. Beat into this a scant tablespoonful of sugar and the yolk of the egg, gradually add half a cupful of hot water or hot milk, beating all the time the hot liquid is being poured. A little nutmeg, if liked, may be added.

A SOOTHING DRINK FOR COLDS.—Put two tablespoonfuls of flaxseed into a bowl or pitcher, and pour over it one pint of boiling water, steep for three hours in a warm place. At the end of that time strain the liquid and add to it the juice of a lemon and two tablespoonfuls of sugar. More sugar may be used if liked. Should it be too thick, add a little more water to it.

A FEVER DRINK.—One ounce of pearl barley, three pints of water, one ounce of sweet almonds, a piece of lemon peel, a little syrup of lemons and capillaire. Wash the barley well; sift it twice, then add the water, sweet almonds beaten fine, and the lemon peel, and pour boiling water over, let it stand for a day. It will be drinkable in twelve hours or less.

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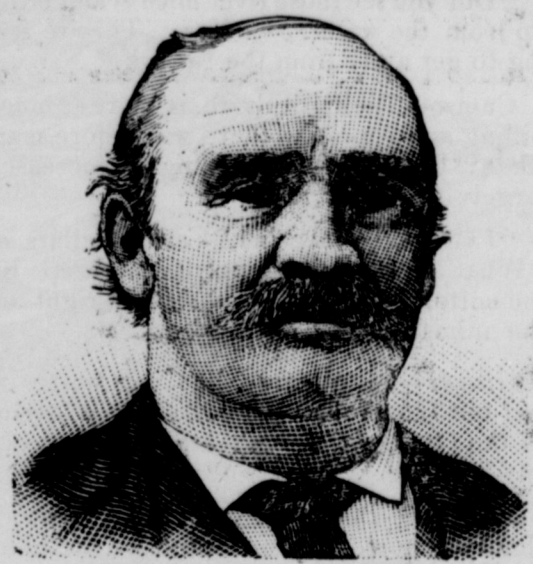
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