

"ASTRA'S" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

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

I wonder if some kindly disposed literary person who finds more time for reading poetry than I have done lately, or who is blessed with a better memory, would oblige my correspondent "K," and also myself, with the name of the author of the following verse, and also the poem from which it is taken, and thereby earn our united gratitude?

"There is beauty in the forest
Where the trees are tall and fair;
There is beauty in the meadows
Where wild flowers scent the air;
There is beauty in the sunlight
And the soft blue beams above—
O! the world is full of beauty
When the heart is full of love!"

If the rest of the poem is as beautiful as this specimen, it will amply repay anyone for the search.

BRUTUS, Tacoma, W.—I was indeed glad to welcome you back to our kingdom, and to know that my advice of a year ago was useful to you. Nothing pleases me more than to have my correspondents come back to me, even though they have been absent for a long time. It was no trouble to read your manuscript, although I must confess that your writing is a little "blind," but it is an odd and original hand, and I admire it very much. Your little sketch is, as you say, "strange," but not at all silly, and it really shows a great deal of imagination and some power of description; but the greatest fault I should find with it is an absence of motive. Sometimes it does not seem to go far enough; it is too sketchy. The opening paragraphs lead one to expect the story of "Leonie's" life and the ending seems too brief for the beginning; but, on the other hand, many writers of note have cultivated these unfinished effects, though I cannot say I have ever been attracted by that style myself. Of course, originality is to be prized above all things, but I am afraid your sketch is open to the objection that it is neither a story, an essay, a humorous sketch or a newspaper article, but nevertheless I found the oftener I read it the more it haunted me, and I found myself wondering what really became of Leonie, so it catching the attention of your readers is the first requisite of a writer, you have succeeded, but you harped a little too much on the mountains. Now I have given you my candid opinion and I hope you are not disappointed. I shall always be glad to give you any advice in my power.

WE TWO.—You may not only aspire to the "honor" but have it with pleasure, and I enjoyed your pleasant, chatty letter so much that I, too, hope it may not be the last. I am afraid though that you will think the answer long in coming, and I fear it will not reach you in time for you to write again before school opens, but my mail has been so heavy lately that numbers of letters have lain answered in the office, waiting their turn for publication, as I have only a limited amount of space at my disposal. I am always glad to hear anything my girls care to tell me about themselves, but they very seldom volunteer much information outside of the subject on which they wish advice, learning, I suppose, that I should try to find out who they were, and forgetting how little time a newspaper woman has for such researches, even if she had sufficient curiosity. It is delightful to have so fond and faithful a chum as you each possess in the other, and I hope you will be able to keep up your friendship through the future years, as some school friends do. Your letter was well written, well put together and thoroughly ladylike, though the writing has scarcely formed yet, and I can scarcely say more. You did not ask any questions, so I can only wish you every success in your coming school year, and thank you for your united love. I shall be glad to hear from you again.

GYPSY, St. John.—You need never fear your name being revealed, or my even recognizing you, as I have had letters from my very nearest friends, even from those whose handwriting I should have recognized, and I have simply read them in the way of business, and never suspected their authorship. I really much prefer not to know my correspondents, as it leaves them all upon the same level, and is fairer to them in the end. I am pleased that you should have given me your confidence, but it is a matter in which it is very difficult to advise you. The love of a good man is a jewel to be highly prized, and should never be valued lightly, besides that, I should place the utmost confidence in the opinion of the relative you mention, whose experience of men and things gives weight to her judgment, and who must be an impartial observer, but at the same time the defects you mention are very serious drawbacks to happiness, with a person of your nature and would be like so many more pricking you daily; there are few things harder for a sensitive and refined woman to bear, but still if you really love him better than anyone else in the world why you know the Latin proverb, *Omnia vincit amor*? and if love conquers all things, why should he not triumph over so small a drawback as this one? Surely if you let him see as kindly as possible that some of the ways you speak of are distasteful to you, and that you are really grieved by them, he will try to improve and be more like you; it is the very least he can do in return for your love, and if he does not love you well enough to try, for your sake, I think I should give him up, if I were you. This is the best advice I can give you, looking at the matter from my own standpoint, and speaking from my own experience, but you must be guided mainly by your own heart, and the fact that you are happier in his society than that of anyone else is a very significant one. I hope you will let me hear how you decide, as I should like to know. Thank you for your kind messages. Your composition is all that could be desired, and your writing clear and legible, though not as pretty as some I have seen.

MOLLY BAWN.—Don't say another word about it, your excuse would be sufficient for almost anything, one mild attack of that disease in any house is enough, but when it comes to six! Well, I think some

special form of prayer should be composed to deal with such cases. (1) I only wish I could find out the author of that poem, for my own sake as well as yours, but I have never been able to do so. I saw the verse quoted in a book once, and it made such an impression upon my mind that I never forgot it. The other quotation is part of one verse of a poem by Mrs. Wakefield, entitled "Over the River." I do not know where you could get the poem which contains four verses of twelve lines each. Mrs. Wakefield was an American poet, but I do not think she was a very voluminous writer; so there is not likely to be any collection of her poems published, but you would probably find it in any cyclopaedia of American poetry. I know it is in Harper's cyclopaedia. I cannot remember about "How he saved Saint Michael," though I have read it. So I am unable to give you any information as to where it can be procured. No, I am sorry to say I was not at the picnic. It was no trouble at all, and I am only very sorry that I could not find them all for you. (2) Yes, it is quite proper, only you should simply put "kindness of" instead of "by kindness of."

ORANGE BLOSSOMS, St. John.—(1) May I ask how you found out that the young man turned round and smiled after he had passed you unless you turned round yourself? Even if he did commit that enormity I do not see that he was guilty of such a crime; if you had not looked yourself you would never have known anything about it, and you know, and so nobody would have been the worse. The less notice girls take of strange young men in the street the better I think, and if I were you I should not trouble my head about them. (2) If I remember aright I said that a girl who was very anxious to make the acquaintance of any young man could easily do so through some friend, who is acquainted with him; but it is much better to let the men seek the introduction. (3) Wash your hands in oatmeal and water, and rub glycerine and rose water on them at night, one ounce of glycerine, and the same of rose water, is a good mixture and will make quite a good sized bottleful.

Relieving Mental Exhaustion.

It is a melancholy fact that some of the expedients resorted to for relieving mental exhaustion tend to aggravate rather than abate it. One head mistress told me proudly that her practice was, whenever the girls in any form began to get very sluggish and drowsy at their work, to close the books and give them 10 minutes' hard drill. She thought I was joking when I said that she had much better put them to bed and give them candle; but I was quite serious, for muscular fatigue is not the remedy for cerebral exhaustion, although it is very commonly believed to be so. Indubitably there is temporary easement in shifting a burden from place to place. A man who has been standing on one leg for some time finds it a relief to change to the other; but the expenditure of nervous energy is going on all the time, and the brain that is well nigh drained dry needs rest, and will not be replenished by merely altering the channel of out-flow. Drill is highly to be commended in its proper place—so are gymnastics, so are games; but they will not create a tolerance of mental over-pressure, or counterbalance its evils.—Sir James Crichton Browne, M. D.

Washing Silk Stockings.

The proper washing of silk stockings is a matter of moment, now that they are commonly worn. White silk stockings should be washed in a strong lather made of castile soap or any good white soap and warm water. Lay the stockings gently with the hands and rub the soiled spots gently with the hands. Then rinse them very thoroughly to free them from all soap. Wring them dry in a cloth, turn them wrong side out. When they are almost dry stretch and rub them in the hands to make them smooth and bring them in shape, but do not iron them.

Black stockings may be washed in the same way, but should be kept separate from white stockings in the washing. Some people go so far as to rub their stockings when they are dry with a cold iron, always making the passes one way to make them smooth and glossy. It is a great mistake, however, to iron any stockings. It always makes an ugly crease down the center and does not add to the appearance. It is far better to rub them into shape, fold them up and allow them to fit themselves to the limb.

An Evening with Carlyle.

Sir Lewis Pelly relates this anecdote of Carlyle, who had invited him to tea: He soon worried me into an argument and upset everything I ventured to advance. I tea over, he went to the mantelpiece and filled his pipe which he smoked often, and which I suspect affected his digestion, for he complained more than once of dyspepsia, he ventured to suggest that his smoking might perhaps injure and depress him. "Yes," he said, "and the doctors told me the same thing. I left off smoking and was very miserable still; but I thought it better to smoke and be miserable than to go without." His pipe being filled he descended, as was his wont, to the small garden in the rear of the house, to commune with the Eternal Silence. But just as he was closing the door Mrs. Carlyle called out, "Why, when Mazzini was here the other night, you took the side of the argument that Mr. Pelly did this evening." Carlyle, putting his head round the door, merely said, "And what's the use of a man if he cannot take two sides of an argument?"

Dr. Talmage in England.

The Rev. Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage preached Thursday afternoon in Hengler's circus, Sheffield. The building was crowded, three thousand people squeezing into the not over spacious hall. There were so many disappointed in not being able to gain admission that Dr. Talmage afterward consented to address an outdoor meeting. This was held in the open square, and fully 15,000 people listened with manifestations of enthusiasm to the great pulpit orator of Brooklyn.

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.]

Treatment of Provisions in Hot Weather.

The subject of food treatment is important to all housekeepers, and although the hot weather will soon be over for this season, it will come again, and the few simple precautions following will be found worthy of attention, especially to those who are preserving these receipts or recipes (why not "recipe" in all cases?) for future reference. Beet, and in fact all meats, must be kept as long as possible in order to have them tender, and unless there is a good refrigerator, they should be sprinkled or brushed over with a solution of boracic acid in water, made by dissolving an ounce of the acid in a gallon of water. It is quite harmless, easily prepared, and may be bought of any chemist. It will be found an excellent and harmless preservation for all kinds of meats and fish. Milk, in hot weather should be boiled before being used, or a table spoonful of lime water may be put into each quart. Great care should be exercised that all vessels in which it is kept are made perfectly clean. Milk, cream and butter should be kept apart from all other provisions, and especially fruit, as they absorb odors readily. It is a good plan to keep a small dish of powdered charcoal on one of the upper shelves of the refrigerator, as it is an excellent absorbent of odors. It should be changed every few days.

To Cook Green Corn.

In order to have the corn beautifully white, remove the outer leaves and the silk; place the corn in an enameled saucepan, cover with water, add to every six heads half a pint of milk, half an ounce of butter, and a handful of salt to the whole. Boil for fifteen minutes. Serve on a folded napkin with butter, pepper and salt.

Some Summer Soups.

There is no part of cooking so imperfectly understood by ordinary cooks as the preparation of soup. In most private houses where cook-books are used it will be found that the pages treating of sweetmeats of all sorts will be well worn, while the leaves devoted to soups will be scarcely soiled at all from actual use. This is a great mistake for not only is the daily use of soup a sign of refinement in living, but it is also exceedingly economical. In such places where skilled cooks are employed, a daily soup and often two kinds is a matter of course. Perhaps the reason why so many people say they do not like soup is because they have never had it properly made. The basis of all soups is stock. Instructions for making this have been previously given in this column. The following hints will be helpful to beginners: Cream or milk when put into soups should be boiled. If instead of cream, milk and the yolk of egg are used, the egg must on no account be boiled in the liquor. Either it must be mixed thoroughly with a little of the soup which has cooled for a minute, then be stirred into the rest, or better still, put into the soup-tureen, a spoonful of the soup mixed with the milk stirred into it, and the rest added gradually.

Cauliflower Cream Soup.

1 quart, more or less, of stock.
1 pint of rich milk.
1 pint measureful of cooked cauliflower.
1 tablespoonful of minced onion.
1/2 a blade of mace.
1 tablespoonful of butter.
Salt and white pepper to taste.
1 tablespoonful of minced parsley.

Cauliflower left over from a previous dinner can be used, and the clear white broth that has had fowl boiled tender in it is best for this soup. Any pieces of bones from the breakfast or dinner meats may be put into the stock to make it richer, and a small allowance of any soup vegetables at hand should be added. The cauliflower is to be the principal article. It is to be cooked for the purpose, pick the cauliflower into little branches and boil it separately in salted water for half an hour. Strain off a quart of stock clear and free from all grease into a saucepan, boil it with the minced onion in it, mash about half of the cauliflower and put it in, boil the milk and add that, season with pepper and salt, thicken, it not thick enough already, till it looks like thin cream, with a little flour-and-water thickening, add the butter, the balance of the cauliflower branches whole as they are, and the green sprinkling of parsley.

Lesson.—This is an instance of how the remains of one dinner can be worked into a part of another. Suppose the day before you had boiled fowl for a joint with cauliflower as a vegetable. The water that the fowl was boiled in gives you the stock, and a few cents extra will guarantee you sufficient cauliflower to enable you to have this particular kind of soup, or tomatoes, carrots, green peas, &c., can be used much in the same way as the cauliflower. The three latter vegetables as well as parsnips, artichokes, spinach. Turnips when made into soup are best when cooked separately, mashed, passed through a sieve and added to a well seasoned stock, thus making what is called a puree. This is thicker than an ordinary soup and quite smooth. It is generally considered a reproach to say "the soup is thin," and our people have to be educated up to the appreciation of the thin soups of the French. A proper medium should be observed. A spoonful of flour or cornstarch gives the smoothness and substance required without destroying the clearness of soup, of which it must be remembered there are three distinct kinds or classes.—Consommés, or clear amber colored soups; thick soups of the consistency of cream, or not quite so thick, and generally showing neatly cut pieces of meat or vegetables, of which they are chiefly composed, and purees, which owe their consistency to the fact that the ingredients have been rubbed through a wire sieve.

Tomatoes.

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The trip can also be made from St. John outwards via the Shore Line Railway, leaving St. John East, per Ferry, at 7.14 a.m.; West Side, 7.30 a.m., continuing from St. Andrews or Eastport or Eastport by the Frontier S. S. Co., and returning to St. John by the I. S. S. Co. Standard time.

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WESTERN COUNTIES R.V.

Summer Arrangement.

On and after Monday, 27th June, 1892, trains will run daily (Sunday excepted) as follows:

LEAVE YARMOUTH—Express daily at 8.10 a.m.; arrive at St. John at 11.05 a.m.; Passenger and Freight Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4.45 p.m.; arrive at Yarmouth at 5.32 p.m.

LEAVE ANNAPOLIS—Express daily at 1.05 p.m.; arrive at St. John at 4.45 p.m.; Passenger and Freight Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 5.50 a.m., arrive at Yarmouth at 11.05 a.m.

LEAVE WEYMOUTH—Passenger and Freight Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8.15 a.m., arrive at Yarmouth at 11.05 a.m.

CONNECTIONS.—At Annapolis with trains of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway, and at St. John daily. At Yarmouth with steamers Yarmouth and Boston for Boston every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings; and from Boston every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday mornings. With Stage daily (Sunday excepted) to and from Barrington, Shelburne and Liverpool.

Through tickets may be obtained at 120 Hollis St., Halifax, and the principal Stations on the Windsor and Annapolis Railway.

J. BRIDGELL, General Superintendent, Yarmouth, N. S.

Intercolonial Railway.

After June 27, Trains leave St. John, Standard Time, for Halifax and Campbellton, 7.00; for Point du Chene, 10.30; for Halifax, 12.00; for Sussex, 16.35; for Quebec and Montreal, 22.10.

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JULIUS L. INCHES.

March 30th, 1892.

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