

"ASTRA'S" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

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

CARRIE, St. John.—You must indeed be very busy, school leaves so little time for anything else, and I think the hours after school and before lesson time should be spent if possible entirely in amusement, as both brain and body need relaxation after the long day. (1) I think in the case you mention, that I would try if possible to get over caring for her, since it is not reciprocal, and I certainly should not allow myself to be made a convenience of; it is very humiliating, and beneath your dignity, so I should have a previous engagement on such occasions, and I think you will soon find that your value has greatly increased in that quarter, for you know we never really value anything which we obtain too easily. (2) I am very fond of the name of Fannie, but Mary, spelled as you spell it, has a very affected sound, to me. (3) It is fashionable now to wear three or four rings on one finger and none on the others, so it can scarcely be considered bad taste.

DICK, Halifax.—Always address your letters to Progress office, St. John, not Halifax, as I do not live in Halifax, and your letter had to be forwarded to St. John. I really cannot say, I did not know it was usual for young ladies to be ill at boarding school, though, when I pause and think for a moment, I have known quite a number whose health broke down while they were at school, but I fancy they were delicate girls who needed home comfort, and home "coddling," because you know the average school girl's health and appetite have become proverbial. (2) It depends entirely upon whose photos they are; if they are the portraits of her father and brothers or cousins, it is perfectly proper for her to have as many of them as she pleases; but if they are merely the photographs of her male friends, perhaps it would be better for her to leave them at home. (3) It is a matter in which her own common sense, if she has any, must be her guide; should the letter require an immediate reply, answer it at once, if not use your own judgment, always remembering that the sooner a letter is answered the better. (4) I am sorry to say that I cannot advise you; once more, you must call your own judgment and common sense to your aid; if you have been "receiving attentions" from him, you must have given him some encouragement, and now that you are tired of him you will have to extricate yourself from the difficulty as best you can. (5) No, I never read character from handwriting.

DOROTHY, St. John.—Your appreciative little note was a real pleasure to me, so please do not apologize for writing again so soon; I am always so glad to know that my girls are pleased with their answers, and I think it so good of them to write and tell me so, and you know I want to seem "like a real friend" to them. What you tell me would make some little difference I admit, but still it would not alter the rule with regard to a proper introduction, indeed it would make it all the more necessary, since your position is more nearly equal to their own, than if you were an ordinary hireling, you understand, don't you, as I do not want to speak too plainly?

C. H. ECK, Nova Scotia.—In other and plainer letters, Cheek! Why did you not write it in that way and save time. (1) In the first place they have no right to be there together at that hour all by themselves, and in the second, he has no right to put his arm around her, nor she to permit it, unless they are engaged. (2) Well, yes, I do try to place a limit to the questions asked, to their foolishness, if not their number, but I sometimes fail. You can please yourself about writing again!

VERE.—Always glad to hear from you Vere, but I have told you that so often I am afraid you must be tired hearing it. So my advice had the desired effect, or rather your talking it had? I am delighted to hear it and also that you did not have to send away for the cream. You must be very lonely indeed without your chum, and I don't believe you will see him again this winter either, I fancy the attractions will prove too great. Well, no, Vere, I did not go, we did not consider them at all respectable, so Geoffrey would not take me. It was spelled quite correctly. Never mind, you will be far away from the "little place" some day, and I daresay you will look longingly back on the happy days spent there, and wish they could come back again. I really believe "All things come to those who wait," but sometimes the waiting is a little hard. So you go to church? That is right, I am sure you are a good boy!

KITTY, St. John.—I never heard that Florida water was good for the face, and I should think it would be rather irritating if used undiluted, but a little poured into the water when you bathe your face is cooling and refreshing in warm weather. Rose water in equal parts is good for almost any complexion, though I have heard of a few very delicate skins that it roughens and seems to irritate. I should think him both fickle and unprincipled, he seems to have a strange fancy for long engagements also. The Passion Play is one of the most beautiful, reverent and touching performances imaginable; there is nothing resembling the theatre, in the usual meaning of the term, about it; it is a most beautiful representation of scenes in the life of our Saviour, and the actors are most certainly Christians and "heathens." They are chosen from amongst the peasants of Oberammergau, and their lives are so closely modelled upon the lives of the holy men and women they represent that they are almost saints in their simple piety. Joseph—I cannot remember his surname—who takes the part of our Saviour is spoken of as living an almost Christlike life, and all the others who take part in the play seem thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the important parts they take, and to feel the responsibility that rests upon them. In fact their lives are devoted to the study and preparation of the great play which is in reality more of a religious ceremonial than a theatrical performance. Many people object to the passion play I know, but I am sure that if

they read as much about it as I have done, and understood with what reverence and veneration it is performed, they would soon think differently.

PICCOLO, St. John.—It is a pretty, or rather an odd, name I think, and I am glad you found it appropriate. (1) I should think her very forward and unlady-like, and I have little doubt that the young man thinks the same, though he can scarcely say so. (2) If she returned the photo it was not so bad, but if she kept it it was simply a case of petty thieving. (3) No, you are not supposed to acknowledge an acquaintance which has been forced upon you unless you wish to do so, but your friend might feel slighted, as the introduction took place in his or her house, so you may find it the simplest way out of the dilemma to bow slightly when you meet him on the street. (4) If you mean that you have not been properly introduced to him, or even that it is a slight acquaintance, do not answer his letter, it is the greatest mistake in the world for young girls to correspond with every man who chooses to ask them to write to him, a girl should be very cautious about bestowing her favors, because you know the more rare they are the more they are appreciated.

K., St. John.—Our letters almost crossed, did they not? I am so glad you found the author of the song, and I shall have great pleasure in handing it to the editor for publication as you request. I will gladly publish it in my own column, if I can find room, but I am terribly limited as to space. I am quite sure the song will be of interest to others, as you say, and I thank you for sending it to me. Your letter rather suffered at the hands of the typo's last week, but never mind—"Thy fate is the common fate of all." ASTRA.

To Press Ferns. Place the fronds to be pressed, smoothly, one by one, in the layers of newspaper, putting at least three thicknesses of paper between the fronds. Arrange the latter with their fronds all the same way, for the pressure will sometimes leave the dent of the thicker part of the stack of one fern across the delicate tip of another. Ferns with especially coarse stems should be pressed in a pile by themselves for the same reason. The book covers on boards, with the pile of fern filled papers into them, should be placed under a heavy weight; the next day the ferns should be taken out, one by one, and placed in fresh papers with the same care as before. They will not be necessary then to change again for three or four days, and after that they may rest undisturbed for a week, or still better, for two weeks. When taken out they should be kept in a flat pile till wanted for use, to prevent them from curling up.—Good Housekeeping.

What You Cannot Do. Women does so many things and does them so well, too, that she will pardon the setting down in cold black and white of a few things she can never hope to be able to accomplish. To begin with she cannot put a stamp on a letter when she wears a bag veil. She cannot pass a mirror without a little affectionate setting of her bangs or some readjustment of her drapery. She can no more resist talking baby talk to every infant she meets than she can help being afraid of a mouse. She cannot button her gloves and hold up her gown at the same time. She cannot help eyeing the latest feminine comer in a street car from head to foot and then confidentially discussing her with her next door neighbor. She cannot help showing how happy she is when out with the man she loves, and, lastly, she cannot deny any of these things, for they are every one true, and she knows it.—Philadelphia Times.

Women and Equality. Speaking of the entrance of French women into the professions, Jules Simon says that a pretty woman will always be a most dangerous lawyer. There were several women, he adds, "who were great teachers—Hypatia, for example. She spoke behind a curtain. They understood the arguments she uttered; they did not see the argument she was. We shall be a little embarrassed with pretty women when they begin to struggle with us at elections, and more if they make personal visits upon influential electors. It is the mistake, the misfortune of women to demand equality with men. They are often asked, 'How can you demand equality when you are weak?' But it would be at least only just to add, 'How can you demand equality when you are pretty?'"

Both Just and Generous. St. Andrew's, the oldest of Scotch universities, not only offers to women the privileges of its classes with a view to graduation in arts, science, theology, or medicine, but generously makes provision for them to share in its pecuniary benefits. In the year 1893 a sum of \$150,000 will become available for bursaries or scholarships at the university, of which one-half is reserved for the use of women students exclusively. Those who intend to enter the medical profession will have prior claim to those bursaries, though they are tenable while arts and science classes are being attended.

Should Women Earn Wages? According to statistical report, 20,000 husbands in Chicago are supported by their wives, and 10,000 self-supporting women are in New York City. Speaking on this subject, a popular woman lecturer has thrown down the gauntlet to the believers in the emancipation and advancement of women by saying that the modern idea that it is a suitable or even a praiseworthy thing for a woman to earn her living, is bad political economy, bad morals, and bad sociology.

Never Say Die For Him. If a wife really and truly cares for her husband, she never says she would gladly die for him, but she gets quietly up on a cold night and gets more cover without saying anything about it.

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.]

I read that in October next the great manufacturers of pure food products in the United States will gather themselves together and give such an exhibition in the Madison Square Garden, New York, as has never been seen before except perhaps at the Universal Cooking and Food Association's exhibits in London, England. The idea is to introduce to the people pure food products; to show how they are manufactured and put up for sale—but that is not all; Mr. Anton Seidl and his big orchestra will give popular concerts each afternoon and evening, and these will be followed by lectures by Miss Maria Parloa with practical demonstrations in cooking. "Two exhibits," says the account, "will furnish joy to city people who take their summer outings from the back fire-escape, and do not know a cow from a threshing machine; who wonder how cheese is picked and butter gathered." The mystery will be solved by a miniature stock farm and dairy, and in addition to all these joys for eye and ear there will be grill rooms and restaurants for everybody. Liquor will have no foothold in this exposition, and no advertising outside the booths of exhibitors will be allowed. No article exhibited must be superior in quality to that offered to the public for sale.

One result of these exhibitions will be to create a demand for pure food products, and the adulterated articles will have to seek markets where the people have not been educated to know the difference between what is pure and what is not. Canada next.

The American Clam Bake. "Clam bakes" at this season of the year are occasions of much festivity on the New England coast; but Rhode Island has a proud pre-eminence for these feasts. They are not unknown in St. John, I believe, but having been asked

How It is Done I beg to submit the following general principle: "A hole some four feet deep and as many feet square is dug in the sand on the beach, or in the ground, and a bed of smooth, flat stones is laid on the bottom; on these a fire of wood is kindled, which is kept up for several hours, until the stones are at a red heat. The fire is brushed to the sides of the pit, and then several bushels of clams in the shell are poured over the hot stones, and on these are laid a layer of sea-weed. Indian corn in the ear is placed, in quantity proportionate to the number of bushels of clams, upon this; then follows another layer of seaweed, and more clams, then a few dozen chickens or any game in season, prepared for cooking; then another layer of seaweed and more clams; potatoes in their jackets come next, although some put the potatoes in an anterior stratum, and more clams. The top layer is always seaweed preceded by more clams. The heat evolved from the stones and retained from the fire in the sides of the pit, and the steam rising from the seaweed, serve to slowly and thoroughly cook each and every layer in about two hours, and then they are deftly taken out and served on long tables or otherwise, with much care and neatness. The service is scarcely in regular courses, as the tooth-someness of the repast lies in the fact that the guests desire not to stand upon order of their eating, but take in thankfulness that which is set before them, with one proviso—that the supply of clams be endless."

Pork Tenderloins. These are the fillets found inside the loins of pork the same as in beef only not so large. In most cities they can be got in any quantities without difficulty. It pays the sausage makers and pork curers to cut them out and sell them separately in other places, why not in St. John? Here are a few ways of serving them. (1) Split open, flattened, seasoned with salt, pepper and powdered sage; broiled; served with a sauce made of the gravy from fried sausages. (2) Split open, seasoned, dredged with flour, fried and served with fried onions. (3) Served with fried apples. (4) Served with butter and fried sweet potatoes. (5) Served with maitre d' hotel butter and chip potatoes.

Perfumed Butter is just now very fashionable at American breakfast and tea tables. The butter is made into pats and stamped with a floral design, and is then wrapped in thin cheese-cloth and placed on a bed of roses, violets, or carnations arranged in a flat-bottomed dish. Over these is placed a layer of flowers, so that the butter patties are embedded in flowers. They are then placed on ice, where they are allowed to remain for several hours. This butter is eaten with crisp Vienna rolls, accompanied only by a cup of chocolate or delicious mocha.

The Secret of Tea-making. It seems such a simple matter to make good tea, and yet so many fail. And why? Because it is not generally known that the water should be freshly boiled. If the kettle has been steaming away for ever so long the water becomes hard, and is not fit for making tea. In order to extract the full aroma from the leaf the water should not have boiled more than one minute. Another important matter to remember is that tea should never infuse for more than six minutes, or eight at the outside. Some teas take longer to draw than others. If it must be kept, strain it off from the leaves after drawing.

Vegetable Cookery. There is a tendency among some cooks to neglect the minor adjuncts of the table. Consequently potatoes, eggs, and the cheaper kinds of vegetables do not always appear on the tables in as good a condition as they might. A first-class cook knows perfectly well that much depends upon the care given to every small detail, and so he is not likely to fall into the errors we here point out. But too many cooks do not appear to acknowledge this, and seem to be

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of opinion that any lad or lass can cook potatoes or plain vegetables. This is a great mistake. There is an art in cooking these adjuncts. Bad cookery will utterly ruin potatoes, cabbage, cauliflowers, &c. These should be thoroughly cooked without doing them to death. As a rule, it is better to steam than to boil. If boiling water is used, it should be salted, the vegetables popped into boiling water, and then be allowed to boil slowly, because if subjected to too violent ebullition they soon lose all their flavor and nourishing qualities. The same care is required in baking, frying and stewing. Cooks should remember this, and take care to see that their underlings are properly trained in such matters.

Frying. is not a difficult art if properly managed, but there are few greater stumbling-blocks to careless cooks. The fat used should be pure and plentiful. The fish, potatoes, other vegetables, or fritters should float on the fat, which must be thoroughly hot. When fat is hot it is quite still, and a blueish mist hangs over it. Drop a crumb of bread in it, and if the crumb is at once browned the fat is hot enough. Some things do not require much fat for frying, such as omelettes, pancakes, &c. For frying these only a little good butter should be used. As a rule, fried food when cooked should be put to drain on a heated strainer, or placed in a warmed napkin.

Corned Beef Again. Since the weather has become a little cooler I have been asked more than once to repeat the receipt for corned beef pickle. Here it is:

Pickle for Beef. Put two gallons of water into a large stew pan with three pound of bay salt, half a pound of good moist sugar, and two ounces of salt petre. Bring it to a boil, skim carefully, and let it boil for twenty minutes; turn it into a deep pan and when it is quite cold it is ready for use. Meat may be kept in this pickle for three weeks, but I never leave mine in longer than seven days. The liquid in which the meat is boiled will not be found too salt to use for soup. The pickle may be used repeatedly. Add one pound of common salt or half a pound of bay salt, and a pint of water each time the pickle is boiled. It will need renewing about every three weeks. The tub which contains it should be kept covered, and a piece of flat stone should be used to keep the meat under cover of pickle. Meat is more tender cured with bay salt than with common salt; the former is the more expensive of the two. Sugar makes the meat mellow; salt-petre colors it.

To Cook Corned Beef prepared as above it must not be put on in cold water and brought to a boil "to draw out the salt." It is unnecessary when this pickle is used, and perhaps this is where the great difference comes in between the quality of my corned beef and that sold by the butchers. Theirs, to be eaten at all, must be put on in cold water to draw out the salt, and, forsooth, all the juice of the meat is necessarily drawn out with it! I cook my corned beef exactly the same as I would a leg of mutton, except as to time—plunge it into boiling water, cover, and leave over the hottest part of the range until it boils again (putting the cold meat in takes the water off the boil for a few moments), then keep the pot where it will gently simmer for five hours. Half an hour before it is done put in the cabbage, which is to be served with it. It must be borne in mind that simmering is not boiling, but may be said to be next door to it. If the joint is intended for a cold one, remove the pot from the fire when done and let the meat remain in it until the liquor is luke warm.

The "Glorified Butler." Mr. Ward McAllister, the self constituted arbiter of fashion in the United States, resides in a plain, unpretentious house in West Thirty-sixth street, New York. His salons are neither elegant nor modern, possessing no distinctive feature. His dining-room is furnished in dark red, with wall ornaments of china. Over the mantelpiece is a picture of McAllister himself, in kingly robes of velvet. This does not represent him as he appears in everyday life, but as he looked at a famous costume ball given by Mrs. Vanderbilt two years ago. Mr. McAllister is not wealthy, but his establishment is in the hands of three women and a veritable French chef. The social leader is au fait in all the minor details, and the female domestics have to wear caps with streamers of a length prescribed by him. He is considered such an authority on the joys of the table that he is being incessantly consulted as to prospective lunches and suppers. This fact has secured

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