

"ASTRA'S" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

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

It seems to me girls it is time we paid the tribute which is so well deserved, to the genial and most useful neighbour who stands beside us week after week, keeping us company shoulder to shoulder, and column by column, almost seeming to suggest by his proximity that it is a good thing for girls to learn to cook, and, that it would be a good idea if Astra's girls would pass right on from her column to his, and read what he has got to say on the subject. Of course I refer to our friend, the editor of seasonable receipts, and I often wonder how it is that we are not absolutely inundated with testimonials as to the excellence of his receipts. And as I fancy most of the girls are too shy to do so, or else have never thought of trying them, so I must write a few words of "praise and thanks" myself, and if the editor of that column is fond of a word of praise as I am, it will cheer his heart to know that he is appreciated. I have never tried one of those recipes which was not a grand success, and his methods are so simple, so easy, and above all so economical that a child could learn to cook from reading them, and not waste anything either. I never liked rhubarb till I tasted it cooked by his recipe, and then it was simply delicious, numbers of my friends say the same and I do not think anyone could possibly have a better cookery book than could be made by simply cutting out those recipes, classifying them and pasting them in a blank book. I know of several girls who are doing that now, and by and by they will have a tried and trusty cookery book better than money can buy. I think the editor of that column is a benefactor to womankind for the manner in which he has simplified our work for us, and smoothed so many obstacles out of our path; and so, as a member of the sex that usually cooks, I wish to tender him our respectful thanks.

LUCILLE, Nova Scotia.—I was so glad to recognize your familiar hand-writing and to know that at least one of my old friends remembered me, and thought enough of me to write. The place you describe so graphically must indeed be lovely. And so your birthday comes in June? I wish mine did; but, alas, it is in January. I do not feel at all anxious on the score of your forgetting anything you learned. I believe I have more confidence in you than you have in yourself. What you speak of was not "flat" at all. It was really a shame about your dress. A little thing like that is so annoying. I do hope what I suggested will come to pass one of these days. You know June is a favorite month for such events. I did hear it and I was very sorry, but I trust it is on the mend now. I am glad we gave your friend some hints. Geoffrey and I could give her plenty more. You are quite right about the physician, it is almost a specialty of his. And I could tell you of such numbers of cases of weak lungs that he has cured when other physicians have utterly failed. I wish you could see him. I am so sorry to hear that it is troubling you again, but you will have to try change of air once more. How is the patient now? Quite well I hope. Never be afraid of writing me too long a letter, as you know I am always delighted to hear from you. I think I saw something of yours this week, but perhaps it belonged to another person.

ROMEO AND JULIET, Fredericton.—Which is Romeo, and which is Juliet, or are they both the same? The matters you wish to consult me about are almost too weighty for my rather shallow intellect, but I shall try to do the best I can. (1) Yes, Fredericton is a pretty place to visit in summer. (2) No, I do not think it wrong to go for a walk on Sunday, if I did I would not do it, one might do many worse things than "commune with nature." The Hermitage is a lovely spot, but I do not know how lovers would regard it, not having had any experience in that line, I should think it rather public my especially on a Sunday. (3) It would depend entirely upon themselves. Some men object to their lady loves accepting any attention at all from other men, while others feel perfect confidence in the girl of their heart and like her to enjoy herself as much as possible. I suppose "serious thought might arise" if the absent lover objected, or if the attentions accepted were too marked. (4) A pearl solitaire is very pretty and suitable; for those who pride themselves on not being superstitious an opal is a beautiful ring and very fashionable. Which of you contemplate buying it, or is it to be a joint stock affair? (5) Heliotrope means devotion; lily of the valley, affection in the shade or unrequited affection; mignonette, "your qualities surpass your charms," and I really forget the others. (6) Opals are the emblems of sorrow and misfortune, and peacock's feathers are supposed to bring ill luck to any one to whom they are given, but purchasing them breaks the charm. I used to know the reason for the superstition, but I have forgotten it. (7) Navy blue and white, and heliotrope and white seem to be the most popular colors for gentlemen's neckties this summer. (8) I really cannot undertake the responsibility of saying what college or what profession is the best, it is largely a matter of individual taste, but really I think all the professions are overdone and soon we shall all shake to trades in self-defence. You certainly did ask a whole "school" of questions but still I was fortunately able to answer most of them, so I did not mind. I will give Geoffrey the love with pleasure. Shall I ever know you as anything else, Romeo and Juliet I wonder?

TANSY, of St. John, wishes to know if it is proper for a young lady who is engaged to lay her head on a gentleman's shoulder, his affections also being engaged. Really, Tansy, I am shocked at you! And if it were not that your question is so ambiguously put that it is perceptible of several different constructions, I would be a great deal more shocked. Of course, my dear, if the gentleman referred to should happen to be her father, and the object of his affections her mother, there would not be the least impropriety about it; neither would there be if he chanced to be her brother, even though his affections were engaged to some other girl at the time. And finally, there is nothing in your letter to prevent the supposition that the shoulder referred to belonged to the young man she was engaged to, in which case she had a perfect right to use it for a pillow whenever she felt inclined; but if it belonged to some stranger, who was also engaged, then it was very improper indeed, and the worst I wish that wicked young couple is, that their respective owners should both happen in at the same moment, and retribution thus descend upon their naughty heads in its most cruel form.

SOME PRETTY WAISTS.

Standard and Novel, in Every Variety of Material and Color.

Extremely attractive waists, intended to wear either with a coat in cool weather or without in hot days, come in shot silks in all possible shades. They are slightly full in the back. In the front the silk is brought in folds from the under arm seams and gathered to make a double frill, graduated at throat and waist line, falling broad and full over the bust. The collar is high, the points turned back in front, the sleeves are full and wide, without being especially high, giving the broad shouldered, narrow waisted effect that is just now considered desirable.

Two cotton blouses that may be worn with any skirt and are invaluable as a means of freshening last season's toilets have just been added to the wardrobe of a certain young woman who boasts of never having more than three gowns at one time, but who is nevertheless always well dressed. One is of blue crepon flowered with white and made with a long pointed yoke of Swiss embroidery back and front, outlined with a not too wide bertha of edging to correspond. A ribbon belt terminating in a smart little bow confines the full folds of the crepon at the waist. The sleeves have narrow cuffs of embroidery.

The other bodice is of fine cambric, powdered with sprays of flowers on a pale cream colored ground. It is smocked at the neck and at the wrists, and is finished around the bottom by a ruffle that is just deep enough to be becoming to a slender figure.

For house and evening wear there are some extremely pretty things. A graceful bodice of pale gray silk has a pointed yoke back and front formed of alternate rows of puffs and gathers. The full sleeves are buttoned at the waist and end in a small cuff. The collar is uncompromising in its height and stiffness.

Suitable either for the theatre or for home dinner wear is a smart arrangement in heliotrope silk and broad black velvet ribbon. The ribbon forms bands extending from neck to waist both back and front. Between them the full silk shows effectively. The sleeves are finished with the velvet, the collar is made of it and a broad ribbon velvet sash is tied about the waist. There are not a few cashmere waists that are every bit as effective as the silk ones. A black one that is especially designed for the woman who has worn out the waist to her black belt skirt and hasn't any more material to make it over with is arranged with fichu folds of cashmere, embroidered with tiny jet beads, and drawn down at the waist under a belt of jetted ribbon that comes forward from the under arm seams and fastens a bit to the left of front with a bow of full loops.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN.

France has a national council of women, in Finland the national bodies are federated through the efforts of Baroness Alexander Gripenberg; the three Scandinavian countries, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, have formed a Scandinavian women's council, and in Italy a national club of women has been formed, with Queen Margherita as its leader and chief officer.

The women of Bohemia have about 160 different clubs and societies organized for the advancement and aid of women in different lines of work. One of the clubs or societies, numbering 600 members, is for the purpose of protecting young girls morally neglected. A home is provided for them and opportunities for study in the schools afforded until they are old enough to go out to service. Another club, the Minerva, is devoted to raising the standard of education for women by founding schools and securing admission of women students to the universities. One college for women now exists, and in four years the university of Prague will be open to them.

Several women in Paris earn comfortable incomes by posing for the sketch artists or before the camera for the composition of the fashion plates in expensive magazines. The demand for lifelike-looking pictures in the fashion journals here has created a similar occupation for women here, which one young lady is following with good profit. It requires the possession of that indescribable grace called "style," rather than beauty of figure or face, to follow this profession.

Among the leading features of the season's fashions one of the most characteristic is the combination of different colors and different materials in the same gown. Velvet is freely used in the decoration of all kinds of thin summer dresses, and if a touch of fur is needed on a gauze ball dress the best modistes employ it. A gown with a pink bodice may have a skirt of mauve with a trimming even of blue, and the once hopelessly divorced blue and green of the prism are wedded in most close harmony in the season's favorite color combination.

This promises to be a white summer with all kinds of white materials in vogue for all sorts and conditions of gowns and wearers. Silks, fine woollens, nile and crepe, embroidered muslins and dimities in plain white and trimmed with colored ribbons. And after these pure white fabrics the next in favor have narrow colored stripes on a white ground, with ribbons the color of the stripe for decoration.

SEASONABLE RECEIPTS.

Specialty 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.]

ICES—How They Are Made.

The past few days of warm weather have brought numerous enquiries about ice cream. Ices are generally regarded as expensive luxuries, and it is an admirable instance of how completely custom rules the majority of our housekeepers. For instance: There are many houses where the dinner may consist of soup, fish, entrees, joint, game, and wine; and yet were we to suggest a course of ice, the worthy housekeeper would hesitate on the ground of extravagance, showing how much we are the slaves of custom.

It is, as a rule, hopeless to argue with persons whose definition of economy is—that they have always been accustomed to since they were children; their definition of extravagance—anything new, or, as they will probably express it, any new-fangled notion. The fact remains, however, that ices are sold in the streets of large cities at two cents each, and the vendors manage to make a living out of the profit, not only for themselves, but for their families also. Under these circumstances the manufacture of these extravagances is worthy of inquiry. It can be

Made at Home

very cheaply without the use of a freezer. Of course, with a good freezer, there is absolutely no trouble, and those who can afford to buy one will have directions given with each machine. This is written for the benefit of those who do not possess a freezer. Nor will I allude to machines dependent on freezing-powders. The inexperienced had better not meddle with them, but rely for their cold simply on ice and common coarse salt mixed.

Lemon Water Ice.

We will suppose we want a lemon water ice, which is simply a strong, sweet lemonade frozen. It is well known that water will freeze at a certain temperature—call it freezing point. By mixing finely chopped ice and coarse salt and a very little water together, a far greater degree of cold can be immediately produced, viz.: a thermometer would stand at 32 degrees below freezing point were it plunged into this mixture. To make the process clear I will here describe the real freezer, which is a metal pail placed inside a much larger pail or tub. The mixture to be frozen is placed inside the inner vessel, and chopped ice and salt packed round it—three parts ice and one part salt. It is now obvious that if we have filled the two pails—the inner one with the mixture and the outer one with ice and salt, that very soon the contents of the inner vessel will be a solid block of ice. To prevent this it must be constantly stirred. The mixture will, of course, freeze first against the sides of the pail, so there is a stirrer, which by means of a handle is made to revolve, and continually scrapes the sides, throwing the mixture to the center until it can be turned no longer. The cream or water ice, as it may be is then taken out and packed into moulds; covered and sealed with butter, and packed in ice and salt to be kept solid until required, or left in the freezer, and just before serving, dished up on a silver or glass dish in a rough looking pile, which if neatly done looks as well or better than if turned out of a common shaped mould.

Without a Freezer.

It is obvious that if the stirrer is fixed and the pail made to revolve, that it is the same thing as if the pail were fixed and the stirrer made to revolve. Therefore, to make, say a lemon water ice, take an empty clean, round coffee can, or any round tin will do. Get a clean, smooth piece of wood the same width as the diameter of the can, only it must be a great deal longer. Suppose the tin to be nine inches deep and five inches in diameter, one piece of wood must be nearly five inches wide, say a quarter of an inch thick and about two feet long. Next get a butter tub or large pail, place the tin in the middle with the piece of wood upright in the tin, so that the wood touches the bottom, next surround the tin with a layer of fine ice—the finer it is pounded the quicker it will freeze—then sprinkle one part salt, then three parts ice and so on until it reaches a point above the mixture inside. Then cover the ice and salt with a blanket, and get some one to hold the pieces of wood steady. Take the tin in your two hands and turn it round and round, first one way, and then the other. In a very short time you will find the tin to contain lemon water ice. Whether cream ices or water ices the process of freezing is the same.

Lemon Ice Cream.

Rasp the yellow rind of two large, fresh lemons upon half a pound of lump sugar. Crush the sugar and strain over it the juice of one lemon, add a quart of cream (or substitute given below), stir until the sugar is dissolved, freeze and serve.

Substitute for Cream to Freeze.
Stir a tablespoonful of flour into a quart of new milk, simmer it for a few moments to take off the rawness of the flour; stir in the yolks of two well beaten eggs, and strain through a fine sieve. When cold add the juice of the lemon and sugar as in the foregoing receipt.

Vanilla Ice Cream.
The same as above, but using extract of vanilla for flavoring instead of lemon. Freeze in the usual way.

Strawberry Ice Cream.
Pick the hulls off two boxes of ripe strawberries, sprinkle one pound of powdered sugar over them, bruise them well with a wooden spoon, and rub them through a fine sieve. Mix the juice thus obtained with a quart of cream, or the substitute given above. Add the juice of a lemon, and a few drops of cochineal for color. Freeze as usual. Probable cost: Cream, 30 to 35 pence per quart; strawberries, 15 to 20 pence per box. It will be seen that ices are not necessary expensive luxuries. The lemon water ice; lemon ice cream (substitute);



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Charles Dickens

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and vanilla ice cream (substitute) for instance, cost little more than the trouble of making them, and they are still very good, but they can of course be made very much more expensive and in great variety, according to the flavoring, &c. used.

A Romantic Story.

The recent death of Frau Marie Hoche recalls the romantic history of this woman Lieutenant of the Vienna army. Frau Hoche entered the Vienna volunteer corps without being recognized as a woman, and for her bravery on the field of battle was promoted to a lieutenantancy, decorated with a medal, became a hussar, and then was advanced to a first lieutenantancy. Her sex being discovered by chance, a Major who had long admired the bravery of the daring young officer, married her, and later, while still following the army, she was taken prisoner and gave birth to her child in the fortress of the enemy.



A Spring Thought for Mothers.

Do not continue giving your little one improper food until it is stricken with summer complaint, but begin at once the use of Nestlé's Food, universally acknowledged by the highest medical authorities as the best summer diet. When the heated term comes your child will then be strong for the battle with the heat. Sample sent free on application to THOS. LEECHING & CO., Montreal.

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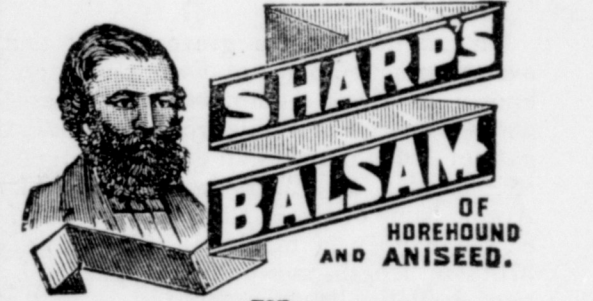
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Kings' College, Windsor, N. S.

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R. J. WILSON, Secretary.
15th June, 1892.



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