

"ASTRA'S" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

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

I have been so terribly ill since we met last that I don't feel as if I want to talk about anything but illness! Love and lovers, etiquette and fashion, all seem to me flat, stale and unprofitable, and I want to discard upon quinine pills; sleeping draughts, mustard poultices on the back of the head, and chicken broth. However, I am better now, though still far from well, so I suppose I should begin to take a more cheerful view of things, though that is hardly possible when I gaze at the pile of letters which have accumulated during my illness and which must be answered.

DOROTHY.—If I thought I could do you any good, or be of any real assistance to you, I might possibly do what I have never done yet—break through my rule and write to you privately, but I cannot see what service it would do you. I am an utter stranger to you as you are to me, and I should not know what to say to you. I confess I am utterly at a loss to imagine what benefit you expect to derive from a letter from me. At best, it would be nothing more satisfactory than an answer through this column, as it is hard to write naturally to a person we have never seen. I do sympathize with you very much, but don't you know that we all have our burdens to bear? I have mine, I know, and they press so heavily often that when I was ill, a little while ago, it had not been for two or three people—not more—I would have been glad to lay them down finally, and be done with the perplexity of it all. But you see we can't do that, however much we may wish to; we must go on to the end, and we can seldom get anyone to help us with those burdens, they are our own and we must bear them. I thank you very sincerely for your kind invitation, but I very seldom leave home, and now I don't imagine I shall be able to do so for a long time. It is my comfort to write to and hear from you at any time.

LUCILLE, Nova Scotia.—I was delighted to hear from you again, and to know that you had really not forgotten me.

BUTTERCUP.—I wish very much that when you adopt a different name from the one you have been in the habit of using you would mention your former name, as it is very confusing not to know which of my correspondents is addressing me. Yes, I think the country in summer is lovely, in winter, too, for that matter, though I prefer to live in town during the winter. You will find your long sojourn will do you worlds of good, especially the bathing.

HEARTSEASE.—I am glad to know that you have always been pleased with your answers, and trust you will continue to be. (1) I should consider them vulgar and unkindly to the last degree. (2) No, I did not see it. (3) Your own common sense should answer that question for you, but since you are anxious for my opinion: no, I don't believe in marrying for money, nor that such marriages ever turn out happily. Many thanks for the love, both from Geoffrey and myself.

K.—St. John.—I enjoyed your letter so much that I thought I would let the girls enjoy it, too, as it was well worth publishing, so I hope you won't mind.

MY DEAR FRIEND ASTRA: I am very sorry I gave you so much trouble in regard to that question. I have sent it to an American journal, and may possibly get it answered. The weather is getting so chilly that I am getting seriously of investing my lottery-money (not yet arrived by the way) in a Florida orange grove and taking my wife there. In vision now I see us there, a happy, idle, guileless pair, sitting beneath the ripened fruit and fondly chewing "tooth-fruit," and looking at our distant friends through memory's far-reaching lens, and wishing that we were with us, seated in happy idleness, and listening in drowsy rest, to scented breezes from Key West, and waiting for the grocer's dandy which would raise the key-vestian "O where, O where can we find cash to liquidate that vanished hash?" which prompt would take us, I much fear, from just to earnest, Astor, dear! (Guilty, with a strong appeal for mercy.)

I hope you will get that lottery money and buy the orange grove. I feel rather hurt at your writing to an American paper for the author of that poem instead of relying on home talent! Did we ever fail in this column to find a quotation wanted, once we threw ourselves on the public? I throw not; why, I had six different answers to the one question by the same mail once; and only last week a dear girl took the trouble of writing out the entire poem you asked about, and sending it to me, under the impression that it was the poem I wanted. Instead of the author's name, which she regretted she could not tell me as she had only a written copy herself, so I am sure we shall get it in time.

LILY.—I think you were perfectly right in seeking an explanation, but the young man behaved scandalously, no one pretending to be a gentleman could have treated you in such a manner, and I should refuse to recognize him until he has made a most ample apology. I think his behavior is caused by one of two things, either someone has been making mischief in your absence, or else he is tired of you, and has taken this cowardly method of getting rid of you. In any case his conduct is contemptible, because you know nothing is quite so mean and narrow minded as to cherish a grudge against a person who is utterly unconscious of having given you cause for offense, and after you had asked for an explanation, any man worthy of the name would have given it. (2) I think I would advise you to write a cool and dignified note to the ladies referred to, and demand an explanation. I should not be pleading at all, but very stiff, as you are the injured party; and it they have any sense of justice they will explain matters. This is the best advice I can give you, and I hope it will be of some use. Let me know the sequel, as I shall be interested. Many thanks for the love.

OLD SAGA, St. John.—Not at all a pretty name, I must say! Since all cruelty is an indication of a coarse mind, I should say the girl referred to would find her proper sphere in some scullery. No true lady or gentleman ever hurts the meanness of God's creatures, so, as I said before, cruelty in every form indicates innate vulgarity.

SEAWARD.—No, I never believed in the possibility of a platonic friendship between two young people of opposite sexes, and no sensible person believes in it either. It has been tried and failed too often for anyone to believe in it now; the very nature of things renders it impossible. (2) Certainly not, unless he has her full consent, and even then it would be better not. (3) No, I think great misery often results from such unions, though I confess I have known of their turning out very happily. (4) I should simply take no notice of him whatever, until he had apologized. (5) I should think her both very foolish and very ill bred, and so would the young man. (6) I don't think I know what a "straw ride" is, so I cannot say. (7) I certainly think that it is her duty to her intended husband to do so, whether it "makes a big difference in her fun" or not; and I do not consider it quite right for an engaged girl to masquerade as a free dancselle, it is scarcely fair either to other girls, or to young men. It is best to tell the truth in these matters, especially when there is no reason why it should not be known. Yes, I must admit that your writing is very bad indeed, you should do your best to improve it by practice. Thank you for the kind messages.

I must thank the correspondent, who gave no name, but who took the trouble of copying and sending me the poem beginning, "There is beauty in the forest" under the impression probably, that it was the poem I wanted. Instead of the author's name, I did not want the verses, I merely wanted to know who wrote them, but as they are very beautiful I am glad to add them to my collection, and I am very grateful for the trouble you took on my account.

THE CORSET'S REIGN DECLINES.

Short-Waisted Bodies Favor Generous Waists and Broad Hips.

Though the short-waisted bodice is becoming to well rounded slight figures only, still the fashion is decidedly on the increase. No style exactly repeats itself, and the new short-waisted bodice is much more graceful in cut and finish than its predecessor, much less suggestive of negligence and careless adjustment than those of the Reacmar or the Watteau women, who are now unjustly made responsible for much that is grotesque and ungraceful in dress. The reign of the short-waisted bodice, however, is suggestive of something besides a return to the ages of powder and patches, and of a fancifulness in dress indicating a slackening of strict moral tension in the code of its wearers. The rise of the short bodice announces the decadence of the corset, or at least of all compression of the figure by the corset. When culture comes in at the window, even fashionable culture, which now includes all manner of athletic and wholesome sport, the corset and its restrictions fly out at the door. Tight lacing, like starched skirts and jewelry with street costumes, all once the signs manual of gentility, are now relegated to the serving maids or to the questionable characters on the other side of the crystal wall which separates the *grande* from the *demi monde*. The woman of good taste would now as soon think of using staccato make-up on her face by daylight as tightening her corset unduly, and the best dressed woman on the promenade you will find indulging not in tight shoes, tight gloves, or a tight bodice.

It is interesting to the student of fashion evolution to notice how the cuts in all Parisian books of the best standing reproduce in their models of style women of full figure, tall, it is true, but with waists of generous girth and hips of the Venus de Milo pattern. English fashions represent their types of modish women, all of the long-waisted, wasp variety, after the fashion set by the slender Princess of Wales and her much-laced daughters. Indeed, the proverbial good sense and good health of the British woman is strangely at variance with her ideas of tight lacing, and furnish most conflicting testimony to the warnings of the physical culture croakers against the corset and its effects.

—N. Y. Sun.

Patti and Royalty.

Patti has met and known well every sovereign in Europe. The Prince and Princess of Wales have always shown her marked attention, which she cordially appreciates, paying sincere homage to the Princess, whom she considers the most beautiful woman in England. The old German Emperor was a great favorite of hers, but when a native girl at Hamburg, and the then king sent her a message requesting her to walk with him in the morning while he drank the waters, she sent back the answer: "Certainly not. I get up early for no king in Europe." Later when, a short time before his death, he sent in word to her to visit him in his box, apologizing for being unable to go to her behind the scenes, she said with tears in her eyes: "Oh, now, sire, I would run anywhere to see you."

A Beautiful Princess.

Of course all princesses are beautiful, as all princes are brave and handsome, by courtesy, but Princess Marie of Edinburgh, the betrothed of Prince Ferdinand, is really a beautiful and clever girl, quite capable of holding her own even in the troublesome little kingdom of Roumania, and already very much admired and beloved by the Queen of Roumania, who so warmly espoused the cause of the English Princess's deposed rival. The Prince is tall and fair, and available in disposition, and very romantic. The delicate, intellectual beauty of the talented Carmen Sylva has completely fascinated the young girl, and wisecracks who predicted trouble between the impetuous Queen and her probable successor are disappointed.

None in Chicago.

A well-known Chicago bookseller received from a gentleman in Racine an order for Archdeacon Farrar's "Seekers after God." But the Racine man received from the well-known Chicago bookseller only a slip thus indorsed: "No Seekers After God in Chicago."

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.]

Pepper and Salt.

He (just after the honeymoon; at their first dinner at home). "And so my own little wife made this herself; and pray, what does she call it?"

She. "Well, I made it for bread, but when it came out of the oven, I concluded that I had better make sauce for it and call it pudding."—*Life*.

The Bright Side.—She (after he had proposed). "But I cannot cook, nor can I wash dishes."

He. "Well then I am just the man you should marry, because I cannot buy anything to eat and we shall therefore not need any dishes."—*Life*.

Just One More: He. "Did you cook the pair of black ducks I sent home, dear?"

She. "Yes, love, I fried them."

He. "Fried them! For mercy sake, why didn't you pickle them?"

These little stories contain much truth, and each one contains a moral for young girls. Surely it is a sign of the times when in one or more of the great monthly magazines and from these down to the daily and weekly newspapers, periodical letters and articles on the subject of cooking are given to the public. What does it mean? That the world is in need of better cooks and more of them; that many have turned their attention to the cultivation and better development of this art, and also that many are willing to learn. The study of cookery is fascinating and there is now every opportunity for our girls to learn to make themselves useful as well as ornamental members of society. They should see to it that their paragraphs no longer draw upon their ignorance of what is now considered one of the fine arts, for their jokes.

The four following receipts are some of "Cousin Madge's." They are particularly adapted for those who desire to live daintily. The first is for lettuce cakes, which is an admirable way of dressing the remains of cold joints:

Lettuce Cakes.

Take the leaves of two or three lettuces, wash them in cold water, then put them for four or five minutes into boiling water, lay them flat on a board, and put a tablespoonful of the following mixture on the centre of each leaf: 8 oz. minced meat, 2 oz. cooked rice, a little chopped parsley and onion, pepper and salt to taste, mixed with two beaten eggs; roll the leaves tightly round, place the cakes in a pan, cover them with stock or water, stew over a slow fire for half an hour; arrange on dish, and, just before serving, take half a cup of the liquor, and stir by degrees with two beaten eggs and the juice of one lemon. Pour this sauce over and serve. Cabbage leaves can be used prepared in the same manner.

Brains Alla Veneziana.

This is an Italian receipt: Well clean and wash two calves' brains, put in pan with boiling salted water and the juice and rind of one lemon. Stew over slow fire for one hour. Take out of pan, and cut into small, even pieces and pour over the following sauce: Half a pint of the strained liquor that brains were stewed in, four yolks of eggs well beaten, two ounces butter rolled in flour, the juice of one lemon, dessert spoonful of sugar, and pinch of grated nutmeg. Stir over slow fire until condensed, arrange the pieces of brain on dish. Pour sauce over.

Chocolate Biscuits.

are beguiling, are they not, says Madge, and this is by no means a difficult way to make them: Beat six yolks of eggs, one and a half ounces powdered chocolate, and six ounces powdered sugar for twenty minutes; add six whites of eggs well whisked, stir in by degrees six ounces of flour; when all well mixed, put the paste in an even spoonfuls on greased paper, on biscuit tin. Bake in very slack oven for about thirty minutes.

The following makes

A Picturesque Little Dish.

As well as very good eating: Make a ragout of stewed sorrel and a little finely grated Parmesan cheese mixed with bread crumbs; also make two French omelets. For these, beat well four eggs with a gill of cream, pour half the mixture into an omelet pan containing a very little heated butter; scatter over it some finely-minced cold fowl, parsley, small cervel, a dash of pepper and salt. Do not turn it. Make the second omelet in the same way. Lay the ragout of sorrel between them; garnish the dish with fried bread standing up like a paste border. This may be done by dipping the edge of each piece into the white of an egg so that it will stick. Pour good melted butter over each one, stew them with bread crumbs, and screen with grated Parmesan cheese. Brown with a salamander. Garnish with small pickled gherkins and scarlet capsciums.

Chicken Livers.

The livers of chickens, generally burned black in the roasting, and consequently wasted, are delicious when made into this ragout: Prepare a sauce by mincing an equal quantity of ham and bacon, put it into a stewpan with a lump of butter, bouquet of parsley, an onion, sliced carrot, three cloves, a bay-leaf, half a clove of garlic, and a wineglassful of white wine; let it simmer for an hour, then pass through a sieve. Lard seven fat chicken's livers with narrow strips of truffles, set them in a stewpan with small pieces of butter, moisten them with a rich gravy, and let them cook slowly for twenty minutes with covered stewpan in a hot oven. Then drain and dish them, covering them with the above sauce. A piece of fried bread should be placed between each liver, and a fine truffle in the centre of the dish. Rabbit livers can be prepared in the same way.

Oyster Stew—Milk Stew.

Cook the oysters and the milk in separate sauce pans. Dip the oysters from the saucepan into the bowl they are to be served in, add a ladleful of the milk and a small piece of fresh butter. Serve oyster crackers separately with the stew.

Just Opened.

Children's English Ankle Ties, Spring Heels.
Children's French Ankle Ties, Spring Heels.
Children's Dongola Ankle Ties, Spring Heels.
Children's Bronze (Paris made) Ties.
Children's Bronze (Paris made) Ankle Ties.
Children's Dongola one strap Shoes.
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Oysters do not always curdle the milk when boiled in it, but there is always a danger that they may, so the rule is not to run any risk. Besides, to cook the oysters in the milk, although good for flavor, always makes a dingy looking stew, with a scum on top. To obtain the best quality and appearance, boil some oyster liquor separately and keep it ready for orders. As it reaches boiling point the scum on top must be skimmed off, and after that pour it through a fine strainer into a clean saucepan, and you have the oyster essence clear and ready for use without detriment to the appearances.

It is with cooking an oyster as with cooking an egg. It may be soft-boiled or hard-boiled, only there is the difference that an oyster boiled hard is spoiled. To cook oysters for stews, set some of the liquor that has been boiled as above mentioned in a little saucepan and drop in the oysters with a fork. Add a pinch of salt if needed, a little pepper, shake them back and forth while heating, and as soon as the liquor fairly boils they are done. Time, about three minutes, or less, for one stew.

Plain Stew.

The oysters cooked as above with the liquor only served with them and no milk.

Oyster Pies.

These are very nice for luncheon or tea. The size can be varied according to the requirements. They can be individual pies of the size of a small saucer or larger to admit of division. Lay a very thin crust of common pie paste on the plate or saucer, put in the oysters and their liquor, dredge with salt and pepper, drop in a piece of fresh butter, cover with a thin top crust and bake quickly in a brisk oven. Serve the pie in a soup plate and pour a little thin oyster sauce or milk stew liquor around it.

Boiled Codfish and Oyster Sauce.

Boil the fish in plain salted water for about half an hour, or until the fish will leave the back bone. Serve the following sauce with it.

White Oyster Sauce—Common.

A cupful of oyster liquor prepared as for oyster stew above.
2 dozen oysters.
Butter, the size of an egg.
1 tablespoonful of flour.

Have the liquor boiling, drop the oysters into it, and as soon as they are heated through take them out and keep hot. Stir the flour made into thickening with a little water into the liquor, then the butter, and last the oysters. Boil up again and take from the fire before the oysters become hard.

How a Woman Reads a Comic Paper.

It is not often that a woman buys a comic paper to read on a car, but when she does it is curious to observe her.

She looks as solemn as though she were reading the obituary of a near and very dear friend. She glances at the cartoon on the first page to commence with, and after a feeble attempt to comprehend it, she turns to the last page and reads very carefully an advertisement of some new style of corset. Then she opens anywhere, and looks at a comic picture without reading the accompanying description, and reads the inscription of another illustration without looking at the picture.

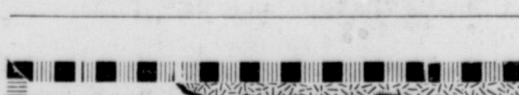
She pursues a mild squib on woman, and her eyes indicate gentle scorn, while her lips move as though she were saying, "He thinks he's smart, doesn't he?" She forgets her momentary resentment, however, in going over a reading notice (top of column, next to pure reading matter) of a preparation to beautify the female complexion.

They Cannot Leg Go.

The mechanism of the leg and foot of a chicken or other bird that roosts on a limb is a marvel of design. It often seems strange that a bird will sit on a roost and sleep all night without falling off, but the explanation is perfectly simple. The tendon of the leg of a bird that roosts is so arranged that when the leg is bent at the knee the claws are bound to contract, and thus hold with a kind of death grip the limb round which they are placed. Put a chicken's feet on your wrist and then make the bird sit down and you will have a practical illustration on your skin that you will remember for some time. By this singular arrangement, seen only in such birds as roost, they will rest comfortably and never think of holding on, for it is impossible for them to let go till they stand up.—*Globe-Democrat*.

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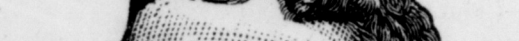
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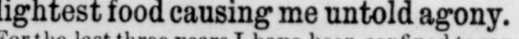
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And its effect on a Burn or Scald is really astonishing; it removes the anguish in a very short time without leaving a blister.

PRICE, 50 cents per Pot; \$5 per dozen; Six dozen \$26; One Gross \$50.

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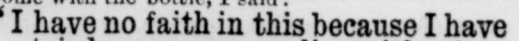
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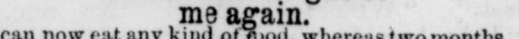
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