

WOMAN and HER WORK.

The cat has been an invalid this week, girls, and she has been, and is still, so very much under the weather, that I have little hope of her recovery, and my duties in the sick-room—which is a very small chamber indeed, and situated directly under the hall store—are still very arduous. I can assure you girls, speaking in the light of experience, that it is a serious matter to take entire charge of a sick person whose entire breathing apparatus is out of repair, every air-tube being rendered almost useless by a combination of influenza and quinsy, who objects strenuously to treatment of any kind, and endorses her objections with very pointed arguments, in the shape of eighteen claws, which are kept in such excellent repair that they are like nothing in the world but cambric needles for sharpness. I have washed that patient's face "three times a day, in as hot water as can be borne" for the last week, each time literally at the sword's point, and I have forced the small allowance of warm cream, which has been her only sustenance for more than a week, down her unwilling and sore throat; in short, I have been more than a mother to her, and I have realized more fully than I ever expected to, "how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child." She is a very docile patient indeed, when you don't make any effort to ameliorate her condition in any way, but just try to improve it, and you will soon find that she is like "the masses" she dislikes the idea of being improved.

So, taken altogether girls, do you wonder that I am "worn to fiddle strings?" and after all, just fancy my disappointment at not having a chance of trying my hand at any of the lovely recipes for sick room cookery that I published some time ago. By the way—Geoffrey has been taking a tonic lately, a thing he never was known to do of his own free will in all his life before, and when I asked him anxiously if he felt ill, he said no, but an ounce of prevention was worth a pound of cure, and since he had been reading some of my sick room recipes, he had taken more interest in preserving his health than ever before. He ought to be tarred and feathered, oughtn't he?

I thought I would give you a little rest from cooking last week girls, because it was a sort of fast week, and so we had no right to be making experiments in cooking, though perhaps after all, those very experiments may be the severest penance to those who are obliged to partake of the results—I know Geoffrey says he feels that he faces death for my sweet sake, every time I have an experimental fit in the culinary line, and he consents to sample the harvest of my labours. Nevertheless, and Geoffrey notwithstanding, I don't know what would happen if we did not believe in progression in cookery as well as everything else, I don't know what would become of the sterner half of humanity in whose interests most of the experiments are made, because they would find it difficult indeed, loving variety as they do, to go on in the same beaten track travelled by our grandfathers, who in their younger days never even heard of scalloped oysters or chicken fricasee, and to whom gelatine was an unknown luxury, and evaporated vegetables or fruits an unimagined wonder which had not yet appeared on the utmost rim of their horizon. And so someone must try new things, and make improvements on the old, even if the results of such experiments are not always successful, else we should travel in circles like the horse in a threshing mill, and be always going, without ever getting anywhere.

In the course of some recent researches in the wide realm of gastronomic art, I found out a delightful way of making a scallop out of fresh codfish, and it is only right and fitting that we should turn our attention to the most appetizing methods of cooking fish, since we shall have to consume a good deal of that excellent brain food during the next few weeks.

Scalloped Fresh Codfish.

Take the fish left from dinner and pick it over carefully, preserving the flakes as well as possible, so as to avoid the messy look that fish will get, when it is mixed up too much, put a layer of bread crumbs in the bottom of a deep dish, then a layer of the fish, and if you have any of the egg sauce or melted butter which was served at dinner with the cod, pour a thin layer of it over the bread crumbs and fish, and repeat the process until the dish is full, finishing off with a layer of biscuit crumbs, which will brown better than the bread. If the egg sauce or melted butter is not at hand milk can be used instead, but the usual fault with all fish scallops, except oysters, is their dryness, and the milk will be found a great improvement, both with lobster, salmon or finnan haddie as well as cod.

Here are one or two other dishes which may prove useful in varying the monotony of Lenten fare, and to mitigating the rigors of the penitential menu for those who fast as a matter of form but fail to derive any appreciable benefit from doing so.

Oysters on Toast.

Drain the liquor from a quart of oysters, cut each oyster into four pieces, let the liquor come to a boil and then dip out a small cupful and keep it hot. Stir into the

remainder a large teaspoonful of corn starch. In another saucepan heat half a cupful of milk, stir the oysters into the thickened liquor; season with pepper and salt and cook for five minutes, then add the milk. Line a hot dish with slices of buttered toast, moisten with the reserved liquor, and cover with the oysters. This is a delicious luncheon or tea dish.

Salmon Croquettes.

Canned salmon is preferable, as it takes less time to prepare. One pound of salmon chopped fine, one cup of cream, two tablespoonfuls of butter, one tablespoonful of flour, three eggs, one pint of bread crumbs, pepper and salt, mix the flour and butter together, let the cream, milk will do if cream be unobtainable, come to a boil; stir in the flour and butter, the salmon and seasoning, and boil for one minute, then stir in one well beaten egg and remove from the fire. When cold make into croquettes and fry in hot lard.

Scalloped Salmon.

One can of salmon will make a good sized dish, put salmon and bread crumbs in alternate layers, finish with a layer of bread crumbs, literally besprinkled with little lumps of butter, and pour nearly a cupful of milk over all. Bake in a moderately hot oven for half an hour.

An odd, but savory dish, which possesses at least the charm of novelty is—

Baked Eggs.

Soak a good sized cupful of bread crumbs in half a cupful of hot milk for twenty minutes, then stir in a teaspoonful of butter, the beaten yolk of an egg, a tablespoonful of grated cheese, two tablespoonfuls of savory broth, or stock, a little minced onion and a teaspoonful of chopped parsley. Pour the mixture into a scallop dish, cover, and put into a quick oven for six minutes, then lift the cover, break as many eggs as the dish will hold on the surface, sift fine bread crumbs over them, and bake for three minutes longer. Serve in the same dish it is baked in.

So much for Lenten dishes, by way of a dessert for which here is a delicious recipe for rum jelly which a valued friend "across the border" has just sent me. It is said to be superior to wine jelly.

Rum Jelly.

One package of Plymouth Rock, or Nelson's gelatine—the former is the best. Soak in a pint of cold water for half an hour, then add a quart of boiling water, one pound of granulated sugar, the juice of two lemons, two teaspoonfuls of essence of lemon and a tablespoonful of rum—old Medford if possible. Pour into moulds, and let it set.

I am not going to talk fashions at all, this week, girls, I simply can't because I am too utterly disgusted with the fashions to even talk about them: I have been looking over a number of fashion papers and plates, this morning, because I intended writing quite a dissertation on the whims of dame Fashion, but the pictures were too much for me, they made me absolutely weak with apprehension lest some day in the near future, that mysterious glamor which fashion seems to cast over her votaries should dazzle me into making a similar guy of myself. What a pity it is that good Rabbie Burn's prayer could not be granted, and "some power the gift would give us, to see ourself's as others see us."

Long ago, when I was a very small child, one of our family treasures consisted of a year of very old "Illustrated London News," which had been carefully preserved by my grandfather on account of the spirited illustrations they contained, of the fireworks and other rejoicings with which the close of the Crimean war was celebrated. On rainy days, or when I had a particularly bad sore throat, I was sometimes allowed to look through those papers, and some of the pictures made such an impression on my infant mind, that I can see them now in fancy. There was one of the Queen, then quite a young woman, and she wore a cottage bonnet of white chip with an immense blue feather draped over the top of it and yards of "blonde" lace quilled up into a sort of bonnet cap around the face. One page of each number was devoted to fashions, and little did I dream, as I gazed fascinated upon those fearful and wonderful representations of the once prevailing mode, that I should ever live to see the same fashions actually in vogue! Why girls I really saw two illustrations in a late New York fashion paper, which might absolutely have been cut out of that old file of papers, and put in amongst the others by mistake.

One was a smirking damsel in a very full skirted dress trimmed with five rows of some kind of insertion, it was gathered in at the waist to a broad belt, and it had a full baby bodice finished with a deep round yoke, with a deep frill of lace or embroidery around it like a cape; immense balloon sleeves, the cuffs of which extended far above the elbow, finished this awful costume, which was a sort of nightmare dream of 1840. The other illustration was of a wide brimmed rather flat hat, trimmed with bows of ribbon, and garnished with a falling flounce of lace, falling from the edge of the brim. It was terrible; and the mere thought of such a fashion ever becoming

general was enough to make one feel depressed. How are we going to look, those amongst us who have not been blessed with the gift of great beauty to counteract such hideousness of attire? I dare not answer the question, I feel too heart sick, but I have a well defined suspicion that we are going to look a good deal like his satanic majesty's rag baby, and we all know that baby was not celebrated for its good looks.

But if I cannot discourse on fashions I can gossip a little about complexions, eye-lashes and good looks in general, a subject I have rather neglected of late, though it is needless to say it is one which is very near my heart.

I have seen my favorite hot water remedy so sadly traduced, and abused lately, that I feel compelled to lift up my voice once more in its praise. The opponents of this best of all cosmetics, assert that it makes the skin tender, and susceptible to cold, that it also makes it so soft that wrinkles soon form, and mar the beauty forever.

Now common sense tells us that babies have soft skins, and yet whoever heard of a baby being wrinkled; in fact no skin can possibly be beautiful unless it is soft, because hardness and "blowness" invariably go together; and my experience is that cold water never should be used even in summer—of course I mean very cold water—while in winter I believe it would injure the best complexion in the world, because it would simply refuse to cleanse it, and leave such a quantity of dust and foreign matter in the pores as would go a long way towards a crop of pimples and blackheads in the spring. Soap and hot water are absolutely necessary to cleanse the face, and I think most people will agree with me that no face which is not clean can be lovely. The dust will stick to the face and fill up the tiny, delicate breathing cells of the skin, just as it will stick to the most delicate china or the finest fabric; and it must be washed off, or else the pores are clogged and the complexion ruined. I have tried both hot and cold water faithfully, and I most unhesitatingly pronounce in favor of the former. Apart from its cleansing properties I consider it the best cosmetic known, and it is invaluable when you are tired out, nervous, and inclined to be fretful. Just try it some day when you feel a nervous headache coming on: Take off your basque, tuck up your hair and sponge your face, throat and back of your neck with the hottest water you can bear, rubbing upward in long even strokes, and finishing off by dashing plenty of the water over your face with both hands. Why in ten minutes you will feel ten years younger, and in all probability the headache will have receded so far into the distance as to be beyond the range of your vision. Just try it and see for yourself, if you have not already made the experiment. About the eyelashes? I had almost forgotten. Well try cocoa butter melted and applied to the roots of the upper lids each night, and I think you will find the result satisfactory.

ASTRA.

ARISE AGAINST CRINOLINES.

Shall Hoop Skirts Surround the Persons of Our Wives and Sisters. John Strange Winter (Henrietta E. V. Stannard,) writes as follows to the London Times: "Will you allow me to express through your columns my hearty thanks for the prompt and generous support the press have given to the 'No Crinoline League,' and to the many thousands of women who have responded to my invitation. (I have enrolled 5,265 members since last Tuesday.)

"Others imagine that the danger is more imaginary than real. This delusion will be assiduously fostered until the crinolines are ready. No one really believes the scenes will venture to deny my assertion that certain firms are at this moment specially busy manufacturing crinoline materials and accompaniments. This league will, I hope, stop or modify this activity—it is the protest is not already too late. We may be sure that, when once huge stocks have been prepared for the 'ready-made' trade, the most desperate effort will be made to force the fashion upon us. Our tastes cannot be expected to carry weight with capitalists and speculators busy with their investments.

"As a matter of fact, more than the thin edge of the wedge has been already driven home. Last week the Regent street firm which boasts of selling more dresses than any other in England was showing dresses containing no less than this half hoops of steel! From that to the crinoline in all its dangerous vulgarity is but a step. But if I rightly understand the temper of sensible woman at this moment, it will not be taken by the vast majority.

"I for one will not waste my time and energies in opposing reasonable change and variety in dress, nor in advocating fads or 'reforms' which do not obviously appeal to our common sense. But there is a real body of opinion as to the crinoline which only needs a medium of expression, and there is a real danger of the fashion coming in if this opinion is not sounded at once, and, therefore, I do earnestly ask every woman in the land, and particularly those in high places, to send me, without delay of a day, their promise 'to do all they can to prevent the wearing of crinoline.'"

Wives for Literary Men.

The wife of one of our most successful authors told me the other evening that a literary man should never propose to a girl until he was satisfied on the matter of her domestic accomplishments, says a writer in the N. Y. Press. "It is a great mistake," she said decisively, "for brainy men to marry brains, and, happily, few of them do it. Bring two geniuses together in matrimony and you have two cats in a bag—nervous, fretful, high strung, irresponsible

DURING FEBRUARY

we propose closing out a number of Lines which if not sold this month will not be sold this winter. Therefore the following lines will go at prices that in some cases will be much less than cost.

Men's and Women's Black Moose Moccasins DON'T sell at \$1.75. We'll try them at 75c., all around. Men's Yellow Buckskin Moccasins, broken sizes, \$1.50 and \$1.75. Now at \$1.00. Women's warm German Slippers, broken sizes, formerly \$1.00 and \$1.50. Now 50c., 75c. and \$1.00. Children's German Slippers, formerly 50c. Now 25c. Youth's Oil Tan Larrigans, formerly 75c. Now 25c. Sizes 10, 11, 12 only. Women's, Misses' and Children's Warm Lined Skating Boots at reduced prices.

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creatures, with no patience for each other's errors and not enough common sense between them for one household. What a literary man needs is a clear-headed, sensible, entirely womanly wife, who will forget his whims and vagaries in remembering his brilliancy, and excuse his absentmindedness in her knowledge that his thoughts are engaged on things that will pay the rent. The woman who marries an author soon learns that she must be a constant shield between his sensitive nature and disagreeable accidents; something, in fact, like the rope cushions that sailors put down the side of a vessel to keep it from jarring too roughly against the dock. I never wrote a word for publication, painted a picture, composed music or did anything worth mentioning. But I make my husband just the kind of a wife he needs by taking all the irritation of bills, household and social cares on myself and keeping him constantly in good trim physically as well as mentally for his work.

Without love life is scarcely worth living; with it the worst blows of fortune fall comparatively muffled and harmless. So long as we love and are beloved, we can bear the whips and stings with stoical equanimity. When love fails us, or the beloved is taken from us, then are our armour of pride, our defence, and our safeguard gone.

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ROBERT MCCUEN, St. John, N. B., writes:

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