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THE LARK'S FOSTER-MOTHER.

A partridge, roaming o'er a field,
Espied a nest but half concealed
By grasses overgrown,
And from within the moss-rimmed cut
A pretty speckled egg peeped up,
Looking forlorn, alone.

The timid creature, fearing ill
Might harm the egg, already chill,
By generous impulse stirred,
Slipped quietly upon the nest,
And folded close against her breast
The cradle of a bird.

She watched and fed the nes ling small,
And blithely answered to its call,
As if it were her own;
From many of her ways beguiled
Because of this peculiar child
Upon her bounty thrown.

When she believed 'twould tiptoe out,
And roam the harvest fields about,
Or join the partridge throng,
Behold, it poised its wings, and flew
Up towards the heavens so bright and blue
In ecstasy of song.

The foster-mother looked and heard
The carol of enfranchised bird,
And felt a blissful thrill,
That she, so humble and so plain,
Had helped another one to gain
The niche 'twas meant to fill.

And often may the lowly heart,
Performing well a noble part
To one amid life's throng,
Awaken with a glad surprise
When, like a lark, the birdling flies,
And floods the world with song!

Our Landlord.

"Dot," they call me—my real name is Dorothea, but that being such a mouthful I am generally known as "Dot."

I am the youngest of three, and having had my own way from my cradle, it was not refused me last November when my sister and her husband offered to take me abroad with them for the winter months.

I have heard some people say there is nothing to see at Biarritz, in France. Ah, blind and miserable creatures! where are your senses—where your eyes? Did you ever look elsewhere upon such a sea—such rocks?

But I am getting romantic, and that is not my style, not mine certainly, little "Dot's." No, indeed, the idea makes me die with laughing.

My sister Geraldine (or "Jerry," as I persist in calling her, which makes her very mad) goes in for being delicate, so Jack and I used to take long walks and rides together; he is a dear, good old fellow, and we are tremendous friends; but somehow notwithstanding, after I had been a couple of weeks or so at Biarritz, I began to feel time hang heavily on my hands.

Being hard put to it for amusement, I would sometimes take a book and saunter down upon the rocks, there remaining for hours at a time.

I am a desperate tom-boy, and can climb and scramble splendidly, much to the annoyance of Geraldine, who declares that I get as brown as a berry, and my hands are not fit to be seen.

However that may be true, scramble I do, and one auspicious day (never to be forgotten) I had got a good way out among some dear old craggy pits of rock, and finding a snug little corner in which I just fitted, I settled myself down easily and began to read.

Suddenly, however, the pangs of hunger seized me (I may add, my appetite never fails me), and, glancing at my watch, I discovered it was long past my luncheon time.

I seized my shawl, and proceeded to make my way back with expedition, when lo! to my intense dismay, I perceived that the tide had risen, and entirely divided the rock upon which I was standing from the shore. Still worse, the horrid waves were creeping nearer and nearer, and not a soul could I see to help me in my distress.

Imagine my feelings; me, poor little miserable "Dot," alone in the middle of the ocean.

I shouted, but the noise of the waves drowned my feeble cries, like they would soon drown me. Oh! would any one be sorry? Oh! why had I ever come to this hateful Biarritz to be drowned all alone like this; I wonder, would they put it in the papers?

All these thoughts crowded upon me as the waves approached, and I had begun to lose all hope, when, oh, joy! I saw a figure in the distance.

Once again I shouted, and waved my shawl vehemently.

The figure stopped, waited one instant, and then I could see it plunge into the water and approach me gradually. Oh, the intense relief of that moment!

By the time the figure (which was that of a man) reached me, I was nearly surrounded by water, and five minutes more would have decided my fate.

Before that five minutes passed I was caught by a pair of strong arms, and was being supported through the water safely and surely to the beach, where shortly afterwards I was deposited, a dripping, blue little "Dot," feeling very much smaller than usual.

My deliverer I had scarcely looked at; I only felt that he was big and strong, and that I was like a doll in his arms.

Notwithstanding my remonstrance, he persisted in carrying me on to the hotel, at the entrance of which he gently put me down.

I turned, and gave him my too little blue hands, with what few expressions of thanks I could muster.

He took them, (the hands, I mean,) in his warm, big brown ones, and said, in a deep sweet voice:

"How thankful I am that I was in time! A few minutes later, and——"

I shuddered; he left the sentence unfinished, and was taking his leave, when I murmered something about my sister and brother and how pleased they would be if he would call, but he interrupted me with:

"I should have been delighted, but, unfortunately, I leave Biarritz early to-morrow morning."

And so he left me—left me with a little pang at my heart, such as I had never felt before.

I gave my sister and brother a slight sketch of the whole affair, and Jack, dear, good-hearted Jack, flies all over town to discover and thank my deliverer, but all to no purpose.

January and February were very agreeable months at Biaritz, and I became more reconciled to the lack of amusements in consequence of the arrival at our hotel of a most charming family, Colonel and Mrs. Palisser and their two daughters.

The latter were most accomplished girls and exceedingly graceful and pretty; and before many days, Kathleen, the eldest, and myself, formed an attachment, which, considering how very opposite we were in temperament and disposition, was the more surprising.

She painted in oils, and I always accompanied her on her sketching expeditions, I sitting beside her with my book, whilst she produced on her canvas sweet effects in color, combined with a truthfulness of outline remarkable in a girl who had studied so little as Kathleen.

Eventually, as our friendship increased and ripened, I poured into her sympathetic ear the small romance of my life, and, as I found she did not laugh at me or think me ridiculous, I frequently recurred to the subjdct, and unconsciously it became the centre of my thoughts by day and my dreams by night.

So the next three months glided peacefully away, and the time came that we should return home, the Palissers being our traveling companions.

Jack had rented a snug little place called "The Grange," and there I was to stay with them for a couple of weeks before returning to the parental roof.

It was a pretty place, separated only by a low railing from the grounds of our, or I should say, Jack's young landlord, the Squire of the place.

At four o'clock one afternoon after our arrival, Jack came in brimful of news. First item, there was splendid shooting to be had in the neighborhood, and fishing, too, was good; then he had visited the young Squire who was "a thundering good fellow," and "game for anything," as Jack expressed it. He had only just returned from a tour of the Continent, and had not long come into his property.

"Ah, Miss Dot," said Jack, with a very knowing look, which he always puts on when he means chaff; "now, there's a chance for you! You would make a charming little lady of the manor, and we would tow-tow to you most delightfully. He is coming to-night."

"Don't be silly, Jack," said I, in a huffy tone, trying to look serious.

I left the room with a strong determination not to look my best that evening. What did I care about fascinating men, when a certain pair of brown eyes were ever haunting me.

"Ah, me!" thought I, "how I have changed! A few short months ago, and the idea of a flirtation would have made me perk up, and jump for joy, and I would have done all in my power to make the country girls green with jealousy; but now I don't seem to care one little bit to become acquainted with this magnificent Squire."

At first I thought I would make some little excuse and not appear at dinner; but then Geraldine would think it unkind, perhaps; and, after all, what did it matter?

Six o'clock struck, and I went to dress for dinner. I hesitated a little as to what garment I should wear, and finally selected a pale blue gauze trimmed with plush roses. Yes, that would do—anything would do. I did care, though, a wee bit as to how I looked. I had been thinking of Biarritz again, and my eyes were very bright when I looked in the glass.

"Shall I ever see him again?" I said to myself; and as I said it, something seemed to say "Yes," and I felt the blood rush to my cheeks.

I was dressed before Geraldine, and demurely took my work down to the drawing room, and seated my little self on the amber damask sofa.

As I stitched away at my embroidery, my thoughts once more reverted to the time I had spent at Biarritz, and more especially to a certain never-to-be-forgotten day, and to a certain tall figure with broad shoulders and kind eyes. I was just recalling every incident of my adventure, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and the servant announced "Mr. Wigram.

I rose to meet our guest. I glanced for one instant at his face, and my heart stood still. I moved forward in a sort of mist, and dreamily extended my hands.

Was it indeed he, my hero! Were these the eyes I remembered so well—this the same deep, sweet voice? He looked at me steadily for a moment, and then a troubled expression, half of surprise and half of disappointment, came over his face.

"Miss Temperly, I presume!" were the formal words which rose to his lips; and he took my offered hand.

I murmured something incoherently to set him right.

Happily he caught the meaning of my words. His face suddenly lighted up, and coming nearer to me, he took my hand once more, and raised it to his lips.

"I am so very glad we have met again. I never thought to be so fortunate."

And then Geraldine entered, with many apologies for being late, and other guests were announced.

Later on in the evening, I confided in Jack, who only remarked laconically:

"Then, why the deuce didn't the fellow come to see us at Biarritz?"

"Never mind, Jack," said I; "he is here now. And please, dear, don't chaff any more about him."

"All right," said Jack. "But I thought you hated rich young men."

This was Jack's last bit of sarcasm, and when, day after day, the Squire joined us in our rides and drives, and spent evening after evening at The Grange, no one seemed astonished; but when he actually proposed to me, the one who sympathized most warmly with me in my happiness was my dearest friend, Kathleen Pilasser, to whom I had confided all my small bit of romance. Yes, our remembrance and love for each other was mutual.

He had endeavored to find me out after leaving Biarritz, and all his efforts had been fruitless. To make a long story short, we were married very soon, and the Pilasser girls were my bridesmaids.

WHEN a man in a Vermont grocery store was sitting upon the edge of the counter, and his feet slipped and he raked the whole length of his back on the counter's edge and sat square down in a bushel basket of eggs which stood right where he couldn't miss it. The grocer was horrified, and exclaimed: "Was it an accident?" and the victim replied: "By crimus, sir, if you insinuate that I skun my back and got myself into this mess on purpose, I'll jam your head into the remains of those eggs!"

Artificial Incubation.

For many centuries, various methods have been in use for hatching eggs by artificial heat. The Chinese and Egyptians used large ovens. The Arabs made use of fermenting horse manure, and upon this latter method a patent was given in England a hundred years ago, and in this country a few years since. Commodore Perry, in his report of his voyage to Japan, gives a carefully detailed account of the plan he saw practiced there, which, in brief, consisted in having large rooms with shelves covered with thick, spongy paper, upon which the eggs were placed, and then covered with the same kind of paper, the whole kept at a high temperature, this room being only used during the last days of incubation, the earlier stages being conducted in a separate room, the eggs being but into barrels protected from changes of temperature by layers of heavy paper, the heat given by charcoal furnaces. But to American invention within the past ten years has been due the perfection of the incubator. There are now half a dozen or more egg-hatching machines, which, with care and proper use, give as good results as we can obtain from hens. These will be more clearly understood, by remembering that we are making a machine which is to take the place of nature in the hatching of eggs. A hen that steals away to some quiet fence corner and makes her nest on the ground, as a general rule comes off with a larger and healthier brood of chickens than under any other conditions. Fourteen or fifteen days will be required by her to lay the nine or ten eggs she proposes to set upon. Every day when she adds an egg to her nest she turns those that she has already laid, and by the warmth of the body revives the germ of the eggs. Now, with our artificial hen, where we follow nature the closest, we obtain the best results. To begin at the beginning, the hen that stole her nest probably had her liberty and unlimited range, therefore was in a good condition of body, and her eggs were well formed and healthy. So with our eggs to be used in the incubator, they must be obtained from strong, healthy stock, which have been properly mated. Where three or four hundred eggs are to be set, it would be necessary perhaps to keep them for some time in order to obtain the number wanted. Fifteen days after an egg is laid is as long as it should be kept. This is the time given by our hen. These eggs should be turned every day, thus preventing the yolk from settling to the shell, for if it does, when heat is applied, and the chicken begins to form, the yolk remains on one side of the egg, and when turned, receives one day too much, the next too little heat, and the result is a failure. The eggs, before setting, should be stored in some place where the temperature is even and not too dry. So much for the eggs that we are to set; now to return to the incubator itself. To furnish a close imitation of nature is the secret of the machine. The heat given by the hen is on top of the eggs; so the heat, by whatever means furnished, must be applied to the top of the eggs, and not, as in some of the earlier machines, to the bottom and sides. This heat must be regulated so as to remain at a uniform temperature of 104 degrees, and during the last days of the incubation, when the chicks begin to breathe through the lungs, may be reduced two degrees or three degrees. Our hen, by making her nest on the ground, shows us that a certain amount of moisture is necessary, so this must be provided for in the incubator, which is usually done by having shallow trays of water under the eggs. The last requisite is pure air, for upon the third day of incubation the blood of the chicken begins to be aerated by passing through a respiratory membrane, which is attached to the shell of the egg, and pure air becomes the life of the chicken. Thus heat on top of the eggs, pure air, and a certain amount of moisture, are the essentials for success. In our best American incubators the heat is supplied by a lamp on the outside, which keeps a system of pipes or a flat-covered pan of water placed a few inches above the eggs, at the required temperature. The heat is controlled by self-acting machinery, which opens a ventilator when the thermometer, lying at the top of the eggs, marks 104 degrees. The moisture is supplied, as we have stated, by trays of water under the eggs. Sometimes water is sprinkled over the eggs, especially during the last days of incubation, the effect being to add to the supply of air for the chicks. The egg during incubation should be turned once or twice each day; otherwise, the umbilical veins are over-stimulated on one side, and the chicken grows to the shell and dies, or if it succeeds in getting out it will probably be deformed, generally being unable to use its legs. The hen gives no assistance in picking the shell when the chicken is born, and none is required, as a healthy chick will do all that is requifed to extricate itself from the shell; and assistance is often attended with loss of blood, and more damage than good is done. A chicken that is not able to get out of the shell without assistance is not worth saving. After the seventh or eighth day of incubation the umbilical veins have so spread out and attached themselves to the shell that the egg, when enclosed in the hand and held to a strong light is opaque, and the clear or infertile eggs are easily picked out, as they are still translucant—the light passing through them the same as a fresh-laid egg. These are boiled and used as food for the young chickens. An expert can distinguish on the fourth or fifth day the eggs that will hatch and those that are dead. No means as yet have been discovered to determine the sex of the eggs, although a good many rules have been given, such as selecting the eggs by their shape and peculiar appearance of the shell.

Headache and its Cause.

Bilious headache, or such as arise from a disordered condition of the stomach, usually affects one side of the head only, most commonly over one eye, and increases to an acute and often throbbing pain. It is often accompanied with a feeling of sickness and vomiting, producing languor and dedression of spirits. Rheumatic headache is commonly caused by exposure to cold, and the pain is of a shifting nature, shooting from point to point, and is felt most at night. All kinds of remedies have been used for headache. For headache arising from a weak stomach, a bitter tonic is usually prescribed. Among the favorite medicines and one that very frequently proves effective if persevered in a month or two or three, is "quassia," the wood and bark of a plant that grows in some parts of South America, and was prescribed by a negro as a specfic. The chips are soaked in water, and a few slips of the bitter water are taken three or four times a day.

Vulcatine.

A Gentleman in the South has discovered a method of making waterproof any kind of fabrics, from the finest silk to the coarsest canvas, by means of a substance called "vulcatine," prepared from the liquid of milk weed. The inventor made the discovery while trying to utilize the gum of the milk weed for the manufacture of plates for artificial teeth. The inventor of vulcatine gave a test of it in New York recently. The fabrics shown were delicate colored silks, broadcloth, leather, silk velvet, cotton and woolen goods, and cloths of various kinds, and then articles such as kid gloves, fine ostrich plumes, ladies' boots, etc. Of the fabrics experimented on, two pieces were exhibited, one that had been treated to a bath in a solution prepared from this vulcatine, and one that had not. It was imposible to distinguish them from each other in any way, except by plunging them into water. Then the difference was startling in the extreme. Pitcher after pitcher of water was poured over a piece of pink silk, that had been in the bath, said the inventor, two years ago, and yet the fibres were untouched by the moisture, the water ran off as from the back of a duck, and a flap or two in the air was sufficient to remove even the few drops that rested upon the surface. The ostrich plumes were dragged through the water and withdrawn without a curl having been disturbed, and hair frizzes treated in the same manner came out without the least change in their appearance. The action of the solution seems to be sure to encase every fibre of the material in a film impervious to water, yet this film is invisible. The pores of the texture are not filled up, as is the case with the waterproof goods known heretofore. Cassimere cloth that has been treated with vulcatine and saturated with water can be dried by simply pressing it with a piece of goods that retains its qualities as an absorbent. The pores of the cloth being left open, clothing made from it permits just as free a circulation of air as does other cloth, and the healthfulness of the material is unimpaired, rather improved, as the inventor contends.

The French Doctor.

It was upon a South Carolina plantation up in Fairfield county. The baby was taken with the croup and Dr. Trochee, the great French physician, was called in. "Bad-a-case, bada-a-case!" said Dr. Trochee, shaking his head; "but me tink me kin kore him; fech a me one new ackissee, quick!"

Mrs. E., the mother of the child, whispered to a servant who departed, and in a few moments came running in with the newest pole-ax on the plantation and presented it to the doctor.

"Me no want a dat," said the doctor; "take a him bac, and fecha me one new ackissee, quick?"

Again the mother whispered to bring the broad-ax, thinking that would do as it was bright and new, bought only a few days previous and never, as yet, used in any way, and the servant disappeared and sooner than it takes to tell it, returned, presenting the glittering blade, full front, to Dr. Trochee.

"Take car, sar! Wanted to cut a me troat, ha? De debble! What fool, ha! me no want a dat; run fech a me new ackissee!"

Away went the servant and reappeared this time with the hatchet.

"Le diable, what a fool! Can you no understan? Can you no fech a me ackissee?"

"Doctor," said Mrs. E., "Them's all the kind of axes we have, and we have brought you the newest on the plantation."

"Me no want dem, Mrs. E.; tink me want ackissee to cut baby's troat? Me no want a broad ackissee, nor de narrow ackissee, nor de pole ackissee; me want a new *ackissee*; federy ackissee; new federy ackissee."

"Spell it, doctor; spell what you mant; we can't understand you," said Mrs. E.

"Me want a ackissee, federy ackissee, new federy ackissee; me no spell you; la diable; himself no spell a me dat, by gar! Go way jack n ggur? Go way—fech a me broad ackissee an narrow ackissee—wot a fool, ha! Go way, jack niggur; me go fech a him myself." And, leaving the family in great amusement, out went Dr. Trochee in high dudgeon, and after rummaging about a while returned with what he wanted—a new-laid egg.

"Wonderful!"

Lester Smith came from the interior to see about buying a corn cultivator. When he reached the city he at once began cultivating the juice of the aforesaid cereal. Three or four drinks didn't tangle his legs, but they made his head swell until he found his hat too small. He therefore removed it and placed it on the walk. Then, clutching a lamppost, he remarked:

"Won'ful what shighs feller shees in town. It's per'fly splendid'—per'fly' mazing!"

A boy came along with a parcel, and halting him with a gesture, Mr. Smith said:

"Bub, ishn't zhis per'fly won'ful—per'fly won'ful?"

A woman carrying a basket was next halted, and Mr. Smith remarked:

"Bu'ful angel—per'fly bu'ful—per'fly won'ful!"

She scorned him and passed on, and a policeman happened that way. Mr. Smith crooked his finger at the officer and said:

"I jus' sheen free stree' cars at once. Won'ful town—per'fly won'ful"

He was willing to walk to the station, and when shown his cell he folded his arms, looked around, and whispered in a voice full of awe:

"Ju ever shee likes er zhis! Why, itsh won'ful—won'fu!"

When brought out for trial Mr. Smith's head was quite clear, but as the court asked him to plead to the charge of drunkenness he looked all around and slowly replied.

"I declare! bnt I'm in jail—right in jail! Why, it's perfectly wonderful!"

He had a fatherly look! Further, one could see that he was a man who never came to town without taking home 'lasses candy for the children and spruce gum for his wife, and that he wouldn't cheat a neighbor in a horse trade unless actually forced into it to get means to found an orphan asylum. His honor studied the prisoner's face for a moment and then he said:

"You were taking your Fourth of July rather early, weren't you?"

"Was I intoxicated?"

"You were."

"Could I have been intoxicated?" mused the man as he stroked the bridge of his nose. "If I was it was wonderful—wonderful."

"How often do you hold these Fourth of July parades?" asked the court.

"Once in a thousand," was the honest answer. "I can't e-magine what put me up to it yesterday. It is positively wonderful, wonderful!"

"I hate to send you up," said his Honor, after a long pause.

"Waal, I kinder hate to have you," was the reply.

"If I should let you go what would you do?"

"I would go."

"Yes, but could you keep straight?"

"I could. It is wonderful how straight I could keep—perfectly wonderful."

"In looking for a corn-cultivator you would keep out of saloons, would you?"

"I would. I'm perfectly wonderful at keeping out of saloons,"

"Well, I guess you can go, but if you will likely come back here, and then you will get——"

"Sh!" interrupted the farmer—"I'll not be back. I'm going right home—wonderful how I'm going!"

His face was wonderful as he left the door.

"The world is not so bad, after all," said Bijah as court closed and he reached for his broom. "Some of us have the leg-ache, some have boils, some stand beside dying beds, some are wronged out of property, and all have more or less vexations, yet, I like the world—I have more and more faith in human nature— I——!"

He stopped there. Some one had cut the broom handle through the middle.

The Code.

Tragic scenes frequently occur at the gaming table. But perhaps the most tragic that ever took place at a gaming table transpired at a public house in Port au Prince some years ago. Several parties were waiting about the room for the game to commence. Among the crowd of loiterers was a Capt. St. Every, a noted gamester, deadly duelist and well known man of pluck.

Some one spoke up, "Who'll play?" "I will play," said the captain of the French frigate, which had just arrived in the harbor, and seizing a dice-box threw to win or lose the amount of a small sum of money that then lay upon the table. He was ignorant of the stake to be played.

"Monsieur Commandant you have won," said Capt. St. Every, pushing toward him several piles of gold.

Astonished at the sight of so much wealth the captain drew back saying: "Gentlemen, I should be wanting not only in common honesty, but even in good manners, were I to appropriate the sums the winning of which I never expected in the least degree, for I thought I was playing for the trifling stake laying on the table. I cannot, therefore, take the enormous sum as my own by right."

"Sir," said Capt. St. Every, "you must take it, for if you had lost you would have been obliged to pay the same sum."

"You are mistaken, sir, if you think so. I do not conceive my honor endangered in reference to paying a debt of honor which I never contracted, nor in refusing to accept of so large a sum which I never expected to win."

"Monsieur le Commandant," shrieked Captain St. Every, raising his voice to the highest pitch, "If you had lost you *should* have paid. *I would have made you do so.*"

This was fire to the gunpowder, intended to provoke a challenge, and it accomplished its purpose. "Sir," said Captain St. Every, "I don't wish to take any advantage of you, which my acknowledged ability in the use of the sword and pistol gives me, so I offer you terms of equality."

"Bring a pistol here at once, load it, and the chance of the dice shall determine which shall blow each other's brains out."

"Agreed," said the nothing daunted frigate commandant.

A shock of horror ran through the veins of the assembled crowd at the barbarity of the blood curlding affair. Some shrank from the room, others more hardened in sights of horror, crowded near the gaming table, perfectly cognizant of the desperate character of St. Every, and inwardly lauding the bravery of the unknown.

Each party examined the pistols. The naval captain first threw the fatal dice.

He threw eleven.

"A good throw," said St. Every, holding for a moment his own; "The chances are now in your favor, but listen, if it turns out as it appears to me it will, that fortune favors you and not me, I wish neither mercy nor pity, as I should think either a coward who would spare the other."

"Sir, I need not your impertinent remonstrances to back me neither now nor at any time," replied the Commandant.

St. Every took the box and threw *fifteen.*

The company were paralized with horror.

Monsieur le Commandant arose. "Your life belongs to me, sir," said St. Every, throwing down the dice on the table.

"Fire, sir," said the Commandant, placing his hand on his heart, "an honest man is never afraid to——"

St. Every's ball scattered the brains and blood of the unlucky Commandant over the clothes and persons of the bystanders, as his lifeless body fell to the *saloon floor.*

St. Every deserted to the English, and soon after fell mortally wounded at the battle of Irois as the English were carrying the day.

Education in the Kitchen.

Education is at last beginning to reach the kitchen. Cooking schools are springing up in many places in this country, and the Scotch and English are taking the lead in organizing them as a part of their national and common school system. We abound in female seminaries and female colleges, high schools and normal schools, in which everything under heaven is studied except that practical art which is a daily and vital necessity in all the households of the land. Our kitchens are the fortified entrenchments of ignorance, prejudice, irrational habits, the rule of thumb and mental vacuity, and the result is that Americans suffer beyond any other people from wasteful, unhealthful, unpalatable and monotonous cooking. We have long professed to believe in the potency of edueation, and have not been slow to apply it to all other interests and industries excepting only the fundamental art of preparation, of food to sustain life, which involves more of economy, enjoyment, health, spirit and power of effective labor than any subject taught in our schools.

"Hard Times."

Don't tell me that the "hard times" have not proved socially beneficial in many respects, for I know better, and am prepared to prove it.

For instance, the young man who used to send a tablespoonful or so of froth in a small glass, flying down a beery slide on a highly polished counter, in respone to my meek request for a lager, and who grabbed at my five cents and rushed it into the till as if the very contract of so trifling an amount might take the shine out of his California diamonds, now weekly whisks an atom of dust from the bar and thanks me for my small investment, humbly directing my attention to a dish which contains apparently minute portions of Egyptian mummy, which, my olfactories suggest, may have been once in the fish business.

Again, at the barber's, I am permitted to forego bay rum without any fear of subsequent rough handling, or (when my hair has been cut) of having small particles viciously blown down between the shoulder blades.

The waiter who was wont to hurl two square inches of boiled alligator, accompanied by a disease with a circle of potato paring around it, in reponse to my request for a sirloin, now places the aforesaid before me in an apologetic manner, as if he regretted that real turtle had not been thrown in as an extra. All this is pleasing; is it not?

I despise boasting, but I really know an alderman. He used to nod to me, or, at the most, allow me to take a finger. Of late he would deposit his entire hand in my palm, were it physically possible; and since he lost "that contract," on account of "retrenchment," I am solicitous for my collar-bone, so energetically does he slap me on the back.

Then, there's my rich cousin. A brief call was the most that ever passed between our families, and there was that formality between us which usually exists between men of $10,000 and $1000 per annum respectively. Since his property has been mortgaged, almost up to the handle, I am "dear boy" and "old fellow," while his wife, who scarcely knew that I was a father, now almost weeps for a sight of those sweet children," and declares that it is "really too bad we do not call "round." The way in which she asked my wife a second time to early peas, when we dined with them last Sunday, was enough to draw tears.

When we moved, time before last, a family portrait was remorsely piled on the carpet broom, and the parlor stove was landed in a basket of crockery. This year, how nidly did the expressman climb two pairs of stairs with the furniture, and apologize for having scratched the clothes-basket!

The exquiste at the dry goods "emporium," who thought it condescension to drop twenty pounds of sheeting on the counter, bringing it within an ace of your nose, or who sneered at the parsimony which refused to pay more than $1 per yard for Maria's new dress, now follows to the door, and looks hurt if he be not permitted to send two cents' worth of pins home for you.

"Thank you!" is becoming "familar in mouth." Even Biddy is beginning to feel that it would be wise to spend an hour or so daily on household duties in return for $10 per month and her board.

The "corner grocer" is beginning to charge less than two hundred per cent for some of his supplies, and there is really no knowing but what the fashionably attired may in the near future look upon the honest toiler in last year's garb as one who may possibly be worthy of salvation.

Mrs. Partington at the Sociable.

There was no mistaking the costume, and the fact that the venerable dame led a small boy by the hand, confirmed the impression that Mrs. Partington was indeed in the assemblage. There was a momentary lull in the buzz of conversation, and the party gathered around the new comer, eager to shake her by the hand. "Bless me!" said she, with a beaming smile, which played over her face like sunshine over a lake: "Bless me! how salutary you all are!—just as you ought to be at a time like this, when nothing harmonious should be allowed to disturb your hostilities. You are very kind, I'm sure, and I am glad to see you trying to enjoy yourselves. We had no church sociables in my young days, but we had huskin' bee, and quiltin' bees, and apple bees, and—" "Bumble-bees," said Ike, breaking in like a boy on thin ice—"and though we had good times, and sociable enough, goodness knows, when the red ears were found, they were nothing to the superfluity of this." There was a slight disturbance in the circle, as Ike in restlessness placed his heel on circumjacent toes but it was stilled as the master of ceremonies came up to introduce the minister, "I hope you may find the hour spent with us a happy one." "I know I shall, sir," replied she, "for happiness depends very much on how we enjoy ourselves, and enough of anything always satisfies me. How could I help enjoying myself in a scene of such life and animosity as this?" "Very true madam." "And then the lights, blazing like a consternation, and the music and flowers make it seem like Pharaoh land." The minister was called away, and the master of ceremonies asked Mrs. Partington if she would like "an ice," which she faintly heard. "A nice——?" she replied, looking at him and hanging on to the long——, as if it were the top bar of a gate; "oh, very." A rush, by the contestanents in a game, here broke in between them, the band gave a crash which seemed to start the roof, the mass of people waved to and fro, Ike started off with a new crony in quest of some suggested peanuts, and Mrs. Partington backed into a seat. She looked pleasantly upon the moving spectacle through her own parabolas, her fingers beat time to the music, and her oil-factories inhaled the breath of flowers and the smell of coffee from an adjacent room, till she was becoming "lost," when she realized that a figure was standing before her, and a cold spoon was being thrust into her right hand. It was the attentive manager, again, with an ice-cream which he invited her to take. "You are very surprising sir," said she, smiling. "I was unconscionable at the moment. Thank you; I will. I am very partially fond of ice-cream, and this is manilla, too, which is my favorite." She ate with a sense of enjoyment caught with the scene and went away soon after, when Ike had joined her, with plethoric pockets, bidding the manager convey a good night from her to the party, saying she had enjoyed a real sociable time.