

FOUND WANTING.

She had read the works of sage from before the middle ages, and had studied all the writings left from prehistoric times; she would range from ancient Horace to the verse of William Morris. While she pointed out the difference 'twixt the old and modern rhymes.

Mothering the Seagraves

To mother a family of five seemed a huge undertaking for an underized person of twenty-two; but when Mrs. Seagrave died suddenly there was no one who could conveniently step into the sadly vacant place except Gertrude, John Seagrave's very much younger sister.

with a family of five than it is with just one solitary infant. I supposed I had escaped all teething troubles, but dear me! Here is Bettina losing her first teeth, Donald getting twelve-year molars, Kittle having to be reminded every night to brush her teeth, Bailey roaring three nights out of five with toothache, Claudine with a lump on her gum that she thinks is a wisdom-tooth—and John breaking out occasionally with ulcerated grinders.



"I'M TWENTY-TWO AND I WEIGH NINETY-SIX POUNDS."

"But Gertrude," said John, "has always been old for her years and grown-up for her size. If Claudine were like her she shouldn't need anybody. But Claudine—"

"The family knew Claudine. It was impossible to imagine that irresponsible dussel mothering anything. Even her dolls had always depended on their own youthful aunts for clothing.

"Gertrude," said Bailey, looking up suddenly from the corbs, needles and bottles with which he was experimenting, with his young aunt's interested assistance, "if I couldn't see you, I'd believe you were another fifteen-year-old boy. You're just like a boy."

"That's it!" breathed Claudine into her glove. "That's the secret! Gertrude talks like a man with father, she's just a girl with me, and when she's with Bettina she's just a dear little tot of five! And whichever one of us she is, she's a complete dear."

"I don't want them to miss anything," she wrote to her cousin, "that their own mother would have given them."

"Nothing," laughed Mrs. Spencer. "That's just it." Then the kindly little woman explained. When she had finished, Gertrude laughed, too.

"My daughter tells me," said Mrs. Bacon, bitterly, "that you never let any sort of a holiday, however unimportant, go uncelebrated. It's all I can do to feed my family week-days without observing every trifling occasion that comes along. A valentine party for Claudine and a George Washington party for Donald, all in one month! Yes, of course, the calendar—but you might have skipped one."

"Harold," stated Mrs. Boswell, frigidly, "almost invariably stood at the head of all his classes until you took to cramming Bailey. Harold now reproaches me for not being competent—the books have all changed since my time—to cram him. You're a great deal too good to those children. You've outmothered motherhood!"

"Real mothers," admonished Mrs. Gaskell, cuttingly, "are obliged to relax the tension at times—you've been a mother every instant since you began. It isn't fair to the rest of us. Your youthful enthusiasm has carried you too far. Things have come to a pretty pass when our own children are holding you up as a model."

Gertrude, forewarned and forearmed, met the mothers graciously, and, veiling the twinkle in her eye, promised moderation.

"You see," she pleaded, apologetically, "my family is only one year old, and five infants of that age are a good many for a twenty-three-year-old mother to get used to at once. Perhaps I am overcrowding the motherhood business. You'll have to teach me your way."

After that the club was again serene. Gertrude still mothered her flock conscientiously, but now enthusiasm was tempered with moderation.

"Claudine," said she, on the next red-letter day, "I wanted to give you six birthday presents, but I've cut it down to three—and I'll take those back if you brag about them outside. You see, we must give the other mothers a chance to catch up."

"They're a long way behind," said Claudine, with an arm about her small aunt. "You haven't forgotten your own infancy—that's why you have them all handclapped."

"Nothing but natural ability!" sighed Gertrude. "Dear me! I supposed it the result of deep thought. But it will take deep thought to give you good times that are just good enough and not too good.—Youth's Companion."

Even in New York, in Central Park, where the many child-queens and their troops of little courtiers dotting the wide lawns have annually, for many years, afforded a charming spectacle, shawls have often to be bundled over muslin dresses, and the nose that needs a handkerchief is to-morrow's sequel to the brow that wore a crown.

Shall it be whiplashed, also, that in our large cities there are children for whom the first of May breathes no waft of poetry, but is known only as "morning day?"

Only in the softer airs of more southern states or in an especially favorable season northward are many customs of the English May-day, which about corresponds to the New England first of June, transferable with entire success. But there is at least one such traditional observance easily possible anywhere, and not uncommon—the presentation of May-baskets, either directly, from friend to friend, or (delightful for the little folk) to be hung anonymously on door-knobs, with the subsequent adventurous excitement of ringing the bell and running away.



What I think, and say, and sing—As if I were close to you?"

"Yes, I hear, my little one, Every word's so plain and clear I might almost think you here, Speaking with me telephone!"



"Well, you please to tell the doctor Dolly has the stomach ache! Wants some peppermints to take. All the day I've sat and rocked her."

"And please, mamma, I love you!" "All right, baby, here is one Doctor sends by telephone, And a kiss for Midget, too."

"Thank you, mamma; now I'll try To get Seventy-One-Two-Nine— Aunt's house—to talk with mine: All through, mamma, dear! Good-by."

Many boys and girls have goldfish as pets, and would like to know, perhaps, the best way to take care of them. They should be kept in a broad-mouthed glass vessel—a vessel with straight sides is best—which should always be nearly full of water. A few shells and a small quantity of gravel should be put into the vessel. Many persons are in the habit of dropping bread crumbs into the water for the fish to eat, but that is very bad for them, as the bread soon sours. Regularly prepared fish food may be had, which should be given to them every day or two. It is a good plan, too, to keep a piece of water-wood in the jar; it will grow floating on the water, and the fish like to nibble at it. The water should be changed at least twice a week, and it should be siphoned out, not poured. The best way to do this is to use a piece of rubber tubing, say, 18 inches long. Put one end into the water, and the other end in your mouth. After sucking the water partly up in the tubing, grasp the latter tightly with your thumb and finger, take the end out of your mouth, and still holding it tightly, drop it into the vessel into which the water is to be drained, which should be lower than the fish-jar. The water will at once begin to flow, and will continue to do so as long as the drain end of the tube is kept lower than the end in the jar.

There is a widespread belief that the oil generally known as coal oil was discovered within a comparatively short time. As a matter of fact, it has been known for centuries. There is a well, or spring, on the island of Zante that has been flowing for two thousand years. The Greek historian, Herodotus, speaks of this well. It is said, also, that the people of India have used the oil from time immemorial. The boys and girls should remember that coal oil is not the right name for it; it is really rock oil. Its scientific name being petroleum (from the Greek petra, a rock, and the Latin oleum, oil). It is called coal oil because many people believe that it comes from coal down in the earth. Some of it does, but most of it comes from rocks that are much older than those in which coal is found. The best authorities say that it has been made by the decay of seaweeds and animals. The oil as it comes from the earth is one of the most disgusting substances known, so far as appearance goes, but it is of the greatest possible service to man. Many things that are in daily use are produced from it, as well as valuable medicines and the most beautiful colors.

In higher education England is certainly the equal if not the superior of this country, but the benefits of that education are necessarily limited, and limited, by the way, to those who have no pressing need for it. In the matter of common schools, however, we have done for our people what no country in Europe has yet attempted. The results have naturally been an industrial and commercial forwardness that has made us sometimes the admiration and sometimes the envy of the English.

What a Man's Beard Tells. "You can tell some of a man's habits and read some of his traits of character from his beard," said the old barber. "If a man spends his days at a desk beside a window his hair and beard will grow faster on the side toward the window. Plants and beards both flourish under the influence of sunlight. Why, one of my customers found the effects of the side light so pronounced that he changed his office desk to face the window. Another interesting fact is that, when a man is up late or working long hours, he needs a shave often than if he took the usual amount of sleep. That's because in being awake he keeps the vital processes of his body in greater activity than when asleep. The growth of the hair depends largely on the circulation of the blood, and the heart pumps it."

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One of the latest novelties in dress material is reported to be a cloth made from spun glass, and it can be had in white, green, lilac, pink and yellow. The inventor of the fabric is an Austrian and he declares that it is as bright and as supple as silk and is none the worse for being either stained or soiled.

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