THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

Seasonable Topics Discussed for the Benefit of Fair Readers.

FASHION NOTES, DOMESTIC RECIPES, ETC.

(Compiled by Aunt Kate.)

Artistic Dressing by a Great Actress.

Let our fashionable leaders study Miss Ellen Terry's beautiful *Portia's* gowns. The long lines, the folds and length of the sleeve, the collar and the pointed bodice. Miss Terry uses Morris fabrics and respects them. She does not torture and render them insignificant. The gold-colored damask clings about the graceful lines of her form as if it loved them, and the Venetian red silk of which her dress and the plush of which her robe are composed in the trial scene is so pure that there is no trace of harshness or opposition in its tints. The darker changeable damask, with its narrow jeweled belt and with laces which she wears on her return, and when receiving *Bassanio* and his friends, is even more suggestive of the art in dress which may be so noble, but which is so belittled by convention and caprice. Think of a round, very low necked, almost sleeveless black dress upon a long, thin woman. Yet this exhibition is not infrequent, and has been seen several times at the New Metropolitan Opera House, where it looks like a *silhouette* against the severe tone of the walls and the general simplicity of the coloring.—*Jennie June in the N. Y. World.*

Ruskin and the Babies.

Because a man knows a great deal about art, literature and philosophy, is no reason for considering him an expert in caring for babies. But still Mr. John Ruskin's ideas of a model nursery are of interest, right or wrong, and so here they are, as given by him in a letter which has just been published in England: "I have never," he says, "written a pamphlet on nurseries; first, because I never write about anything except what I know more of than most other people; secondly, because I think nothing much matters in a nursery—except the mother, the nurse and the air. So far as I have notion or guess in the matter myself, beyond the perfection of these three necessary elements, I should say the rougher and plainer everything the better—no lace to cradle cap, hardest possible bed and simplest possible food, according to age, and floor and walls of the cleanablest. All education to beauty is, first, in the beauty of gentle human faces round a child; secondly, in the fields, fields meaning grass, water, beasts, flowers and sky. Without these no man can be educated humanly. He may be made a calculating machine, a walking dictionary, a painter of dead bodies, a twangler or scratcher on keys and catgut, a discoverer of new forms of worms in mud; but a properly so-called human being—never. Pictures are, I believe, of no use whatever by themselves. If the child has other things right round it and given to it—its garden, its cat and its window to the sky and stars—in time, pictures of flowers and beasts and things in heaven and heavenly earth, may be useful to it. But see first that its realities are heavenly."

Keep the Children Warm.

Half the illness and fretfulness of little children might be prevented by keeping them warm enough. They are often so unequally dressed—some parts covered to excess, and others, more vital still, left almost unclothed—that they are in constant discomfort. They cannot tell the difficulty, and thoughtless mothers dismiss the whole subject with the general complaint of crossness. Warm under-flannels and good home made woollen stockings are a comfort beyond computation in the winter season. When worn in the winter it is common to delay putting them on until the seeds of a sad cold are sown, which may last for the season or even for life.

Domestic Recipes and Hints.

Clean coarse combs with a broom tuft.

Water as hot as can be taken is excellent in case of nausea and vomiting.

Walking on carpets with protruding nails on shoes digs off the nap fearfully.

Brooms scalded once a week wear long. Set brooms away handle downwards.

Scrub floors with an old broom and strong lye, little at a time, then mop with warm water.

Mix turpentine with stove polish, put on cold stove a little at a time; will shine when rubbed.

A little milk in the water in which you are washing your dishes is much nicer than soap.

Best way to make coffee is in a filterer, always filter second time. If you must boil it, only give one boil up and let settle.

Easily-made Apple Sauce.—Bake apples with a pan over them, plenty water, pick out peel, mash the rest through a colander, sweeten.

Easily-washed Dish Towels.—Wet and soap them, put in cold water, stir often till boiled, repeat if necessary with more soap and water, rinse.

For burns and scalds, alum water, apply immediately, keep well covered with saturated cloths. Cures in from one-half to one hour, leaves no mark.

Syrup.—Wet granulated sugar with water, flavor with vinegar to taste, boil five minutes, adding pinch grated lemon rind.

A cup of hot water is a good tonic and stomach cleanser, and a sure cure for constipation. It should be taken in the morning and evening; just after rising and before retiring.

To heal cut fingers with rapidity, saturrate the part with alum water; it will sting sharply for a little bit, but will soon stop for good and heal quickly. I have tried it several times.

The deposits of fine coal ashes found on the ledges of the kitchen range or stove, surpasses polishing powder and fluids for cleansing nickle plated ornaments on stoves. Sifted ashes would scratch the ornaments.

Griddle Cakes.—No eggs, one-fifth yellow corn meal, four-fifths flour, very sour milk, whey or buttermilk with cornmeal; add flour till all is in; salt, soda till sweet, beat well.

Lamp chimneys will last a great deal longer if, when new, they are put in a kettle of cold water with a handful of salt, boil a couple of hours, then take off and let the chimney stand in it until cold.

Either tea or coffee long boiled drives aroma into the air, and pleases the nostrils, but disappoints the palate. A good way is to scald like tea, clear with tablespoon cold water and let keep hot ten minutes or more, but never boil it. Tea is best drank two minutes after scalding, try it.

Gingersnaps.—Boil together two cups of New Orleans molasses and one cup of lard; when nearly cold, add a teaspoonful of ginger and one even tablespoonful of soda dissolved in a little hot water, mix quite stiff, roll thin and bake in a quick oven. These are simple but excellent.

Fashion Changes.

English girls, it is understood, prefer American plumbers to home noblemen.

The satchel muff of plush or fur is popular for misses in their teens and schoolgirls.

Children's cloaks of dark velvet and wool are fashionably trimmed with light gray lambskin.

Ostrich tips in panaches are the favorite trimmings for Henri II., Henri III. and Girondin hats.

A pretty tidy is made of pink siene twine, run with black velvet ribbon, to each end of which should be attached a tassel or ball of pink and black silk.

Cover a square or diamond shaped board with velvet or velvet paper and hang your porcelain placque against it instead of putting it in a frame.

The latest brides' dresses are trained and trimmed with a puffing around the bottom over a simulated skirt of brocatelle. The opening of the upper skirt showing the brocatelle is fringed with light sprays of orange blossoms.

Brides' dresses are decorated in profusion with orange flowers alone or mingled with white roses, white jessamine and lilies of the valley, all these flower decorations being put on in clusters, chaplets, sprays and garlands, or strewn all over in separate sprigs.

A comparatively new idea in silk quilt circles is to ornament the centre block with the initials of the maker; and by the way, when the silk quilt mania subsides, we may still find an excuse for making our pretty scraps into patchwork, since this placed in windows imitates stained glass better than anything else that has been found.

DETERMINED TO DIE.

Terrible Time the Doctors had Giving Mary Fritz Medicine.

Mary Fritz, a pretty young woman who resides on Lexington avenue, Cleveland, O., attempted to end her life on Tuesday night by taking laudanum. She procured the laudanum three days ago, and on Tuesday night started out to call at a harness shop, where Henry Blackburn, her lover, was at work. Blackburn had been paying her attention, but last spring suddenly ceased calling upon her, and ever since she has been cast down. She persisted in seeing him, however, and often visited his place of business alone. When she reached his shop on Tuesday night she held the bottle up to his view and said she intended to take the poison. He made an effort to restrain her, but before he could prevent it she had swallowed the contents. She was taken to the police station, where doctors attended her. They tried to administer an emetic, but she fought them, saying she did not want to live any longer. Before the doctors succeeded in giving her the antidote they broke several of her teeth in prying open her mouth. There is little chance of her recovery.

The Wheat Situation.

(Montreal Gazette.)

Although the majority of speculators may have made up their minds that wheat is cheap at present prices, and therefore a good purchase, it is folly to ignore the fact that appearances are decidedly militant to any important and immediate advance in prices. For instance, stocks of wheat in Chicago have increased over half a million bushels during the past week, and daily receipts continue very heavy for this season of the year, yesterday's inspection for to-day being 376 carloads, most of which is spring. If the crop of winter has been deficient, the yield of spring wheat has been immense, as demonstrated by the rapidity with which Western centres have been recently filled up. There can be little doubt that the next returns of the visible supply on this continent will run over 33,000,000 bushels. This, in connection with the heavy reserves of foreign wheat in England and liberal home deliveries, should be sufficient to curb the too enthusiastic speculator who has been so long expecting a big advance in face of the fact that the world's immediately available supply of breadstuffs is largely in excess of consumptive requirements.

How the United States Mint is Guarded.

"It would not be healthy for a burglar to attempt any of his tricks about the mint," said Col. A. Loudon Snowdon, the other day, to a reporter on the Philadelphia *Record*. "About a year ago I caused all the muskets to be changed for repeating rifles and seven-shot carbines that are darlings. Our outside watchmen, who patrol the streets about the place, are well supplied with firearms; in fact, they are walking arsenals. We can readily arm every person in the building who can handle a pistol or gun. There is no trouble apprehended that I know of, and I cannot divine why the Secretary of the Treasury has ordered Gatling guns and carbines for the mints. I have not requested any, because we are sufficiently armed. At this time there are being turned out over a million of standard dollars each month, and we frequently have $15,000,000 in silver in the vaults. But it would take a little army with cannon to get at it."

They were speaking of a young lady who sings beautifully, and one of the party asked, "Is she a mezzo-soprano?" "No, I think she is a Swede," was the innocent reply.

It is hard to act a part long, for, where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavoring to return, and will peep out and betray herself one time or another.

—Detroit aldermen have decided against adopting the new standard time.

A TERRIBLE PROPHECY.

The Red Sunsets, Cyclones and Earthquakes Foretelling Coming Disaster—How to Meet It.

The recent mysterious appearances following sunset and preceding sunrise have attracted wide attention from students of the skies and the people generally. During the days of recent weeks the sun seems to have been obscured by a thin veil of a dull leaden hue which, as the sun receded toward the horizon, became more luminous, then yellow, then orange, then red; and, as night settled down upon the earth, a dull purple. At first it was thought these appearances were ordinary sunset reflections of light but it is now pretty certain that they are either the misty substance of the tail of some unseen comet, in which the earth is enveloped, or a surrounding stratum of world dust or very small meteors. Professor Brooks, of the Red House Observatory, Phelps, N. Y., has turned his telescope upon these objects and discovered what he thinks are myriads of telescopic meteors. If it is unorganized world dust, or decomposed vapors, as the *Democrat and Chronicle* of Rochester, N. Y., remarks: "How is this matter to be disposed of? Will it settle and form a deposit upon the earth, or remain a partial opaque shell about the earth to cut off a portion of the sun's light upon it?"

Whatever the mystery is, there is no denying that some very strange forces are at work in the upper airs. The terrible tornadoes and cyclones which have swept our own country, and the fearful volanoes and earthquakes which have destroyed so many cities and thousands of people—the tidal waves which mysteriously rise and fall on coasts hitherto unvexed by them—the tremendous activity which is evident in the sun by the constant revelation of enormous spots upon its surface—all indicate unusual energy in the heavenly bodies.

These circumstances recall Professor Grimmer's prophecies that from 1881 to 1887 the passage of the five great planets—Mars, Neptune, Jupiter, Uranus and Saturn—around the sun would produce strange and wonderful phenomena. He says: "The waters of the earth will become more or less poisonous. The air will be foul with noisome odors. Ancient races will disappear from the earth." He attempts to prove his prophecy by the fact that in 1720, when Mars and Saturn made their passage around the sun coincidentally, great destruction and mortality visited all parts of the globe. He also found the same results in previous perihelion passages of the planets, and argues that these circumstances always produce epidemics and destructive diseases which baffle the skill of the most eminent physicians; that the poor will die by thousands, the weak and intemperate falling first, those whose blood have been impoverished by excess of work or dissipation next and only those who are in comparative vigor shall escape to enjoy the era of renewed activity and prosperity which will follow the period of destruction.

Inasmuch as the entire world seems subject to the sway of the heavenly bodies, no part of the earth, he thinks, can escape scourging. He even predicts that America will lose over ten millions of people; that farmers will be stricken with fear and cease to till the soil; that famine will make human misery more wretched. That hundreds will flee to overcrowded cities for aid in vain. That sudden changes in ocean currents, temperature and surroundings will entirely transform the face of nature and climate of countries; that the air will be so foul with malaria and other noxious gases that those who survive will be troubled with disorders of the digestive organs. That many who escape other ills will bloat with dropsy and suddenly pass away, while others will grow thin and drag out a miserable existence in indescribable agony for weeks. Neuralgic pains in different parts of the body will torment them. They will easily tire and become despondent. A faint, hot feeling will be succeeded by chilly sensations, while hallucinations dread of impending ill will paralyze all effort. "The birds in the air, the beasts of the field and even the fish of the sea will become diseased, poisoning the air and poisoning the waters of the globe." We are told on the other hand that those who shall pass through this period of trial will have larger enjoyment of life and health. The earth will yield more abundantly than ever before. The animal kingdom will be more prolific and life prolonged very materially. This prolongation of life will be owing to the healthy electric and magnetic influences that will pervade the atmosphere. It would perhaps seem that the present redness of the sun, and the presence of a belt or veil of cosmic matter, justified, in a measure, the prediction of Professor Grimmer, but disturbing as his prediction may be we are told for our comfort that the strong and pure blooded need have little to fear in these calamities, that those who are delicate or indisposed should adopt means to keep the system well supported and the blood pure and that the most philosophical and effective method of accomplishing this is to keep the kidneys and liver in good condition. From the testimony of such men as Dr. Dio Lewis and Prof. R. A. Gunn, M. D., Dean of the United States Medical College, New York, and thousands of influential non-professional people, it seems almost certain that for this purpose there is no preparation known to science equal to Warner's Safe Cure. This medicine has acquired the finest reputation of any preparation that was ever put upon the market. It is a radical blood purifier, which soothes and heals all inflamed organs, strengthens the nervous system, washes out all evidences of decay, regulates digestion, prevents malassimilation of food in a philosophical and rational manner, fortifies the system against climatic changes and malarial influences and the destructive agencies which seem to be so abundant in these "evil days."

It is not our purpose to dispute the correctness of Professor Grimmer's prophecies. As we have said, the marked disturbances of the past few years would seem to give a semblance of verification of his theory. It is certain, as above stated, that we are passing through what may be regarded as a crucial period and it is the part of wise men not to ignore but to learn to fortify themselves against the possibility of being overcome by these evils. It is a duty which each man owes to himself and his fellows to mitigate as much as possible the suffering of humanity, and in no way better can he accomplish this purpose than to see to it that he himself is fortified by the best known preparation in the strongest possible manner, and that he exerts the influence of his own example upon his fellows to the end that they, too, may share with him immunity from the destructive influences which seek his ruin.

OVER-POPULATION.

The Real Cause of Most of the Poverty, Vice and Crime of London.

Whichever way we look at the subject it is fraught with difficulties, and if we are challenged to find a remedy, we have to go into a question which thousands of excellent people refuse altogether to discuss. The deserving poor could all be better housed now without a single brick being laid or a single Act of Parliament passed if they had fewer children. Even in the slums the rents are lower and the rooms better for couples who have only two children. In dozens of instances where I have asked the denizens of these hovels why they pay 4 and 5 shillings for such vile accommodation the answer is: "They won't take us in a decent place because of the children." I know a case now of a man who took a house for himself and family, and found he had two rooms to spare. The house was clean and healthy, and he had dozens of applications from would-be lodgers. But though he was poor—and the extra rent would have been a godsend to him—they remained unlet for four months because all the applicants had three or four children. His case is the case of hundreds of people who have decent rooms to let for the laboring poor. The large families these people invariably have not only keep them in grinding poverty all their lives, but the over-population floods the labor market and keeps the scale of wages down to starvation point. While supply so enormously exceeds demand, how can any market be in a healthy condition? Men and women, and boys and girls, all eager for something to do, are to be had by thousands, and labor is at a discount. If the supply diminished, and hands were more in proportion to the work to be done, labor would be at a premium. We have reached a point when it is absolutely mischievous to ignore this side of the question. It is not only labor that is affected by the rapid increase in the population; half of the vice and half the crime we deplore in these districts is traceable to the same cause. Did I wish to imitate the French writer and plunge the reader to his eyes in horror, I might tell how the lack of employment brings mere children in these districts into the streets; how girls of 11 and 12 are forced into sin by their wretched parents as the last desperate means of that self-preservation which we are told is the first law of nature. And as the girls in evil times sin at first for bread to eat, so the boys begin to thieve; and we are brought face to face with the fact that we have in our midst vast human warrens which are simply places where thieves and wantons are bred, and poverty and crime increase and multiply together. I have no desire to argue a vexed question or engage in controversy on a subject which requires the most delicate handling, but no one who has actual experience of outcast London can keep this one great cause of the teeming misery and vice entirely out of sight. What the remedy for it may be it is no part of my purpose to discuss, but here again I believe that the great hope is in the new race that is coming to replace the old. The next generation will be more cultured, more intelectual and more refined; mental faculties will be more exercised which have been dormant in the poor of to-day, and as we increase in civilization so shall we decrease in numbers. Education will make even the lowest of our citizens something better than they are at present—mere animal reproducers of their species.—*G. R. Sims in London Daily News.*

The Slim Man's Shot.

"I took a trip to Calumet several years ago," said the slim man, "and I never seed so many ducks in my life. I took an old army musket along and one cartridge."

"One cartridge!" exclaimed half a dozen listeners. "You don't mean to say you only took one cartridge and no other ammunition?"

"Wal, I didn't take anything else but an old army musket, one cartridge and a big spool of wire thread. That's the sum total of what I always take. Ye see, I"——

"What was the wire thread for?" inquired the meek man.

"Wait till I finish, hang it, an' ye'll know. Wal, when I got out on clear water away from the rushes I saw about a half a million ducks ahead of me. I just took the end of the wire and fastened it to the bullet in the cartridge and loaded my gun an' put the spool on the bottom of the boat, where I thought it wouldn't become tangled up, and then I waited for a good chance. I happened to blow my nose, when every duck raised his head to see what was up. I drew a bead on the eye of the duck nearest to me and pulled the trigger before they had a chance to get scared. Jewhiz! how the spool did spin while the wire was unwinding. The ducks flew away, frightened by the noise of the gun, but I had just 150 ducks, all strung by their heads on that wire. The bullet had gone through their heads, dragging the wire with it, and it took eyes every time excepting one; it took the tail of that duck just as he raised from the water. The bullet would have got more ducks only the spool caught before the wire got all unwound and stopped it. I believe if I had had another cartridge and another spool of"——

The slim man found himself talking to the stove. The rest had fled, and none but he remained.—*Peck's Sun.*

A little boy whose sprained wrist had been relieved by bathing in whiskey, surprised his mother by asking—"Did papa sprain his throat when he was a boy?"

"I'm all wool!" shouted a cowboy as he jumped from the form of a prostrate foe. "And I'm worsted," said the p. f., who had received crewel punishment.

Wall street brokers are frequently suspended for swearing on the floor of the exchange, but there is no rule against lying on the floor.

—Bulwer was correct, there is no such word as fail it is mollified down into assignment.

Chicago makes daily 36,000 feet of sausage. A missing link more or less is not noticed.

BAKED AND PICKLED STEEL.

Strange Sights and Sounds in the Bit Factories of Connecticut.

DANTE'S DREAM REPRODUCED.

A Chester, Conn., correspondent writes: There are in the United States fourteen bit factories and eleven of them are in Connecticut, and here, in the town of Chester, within a radius of two miles, can be found no less than six of these eleven. The visitor here is sure to have his curiosity aroused by the din of many trip hammers. On visiting one of the factories he will first enter the forging room on the ground floor, where a busy and curious spectacle is presented. His sense of hearing at once becomes useless, as the clatter and clang of a multiplicity of heavy running machinery makes conversation impossible except for a man of strong lung power. From the ceiling are suspended long rows of heavy shafting filled with driving pulleys from six inches to as many feet in diameter. Instead of a floor the visitor walks on clay packed as hard and smooth as cement, and on which are carelessly thrown in heaps tons and tons of red-hot bits. He sees long bars of cold steel placed between strong shears, which cut them into appropriate lengths as easily and quickly as a lady would cut a piece of string with her scissors. Here a line of sturdy men stand beside glowing forges in which these bars of steel are placed until they are heated to a white heat, when they are immediately put under trip hammers, which, striking hundreds of blows in a minute, hammer the bars flat on one end, round in the centre, and square on the other end. The bit has now started into existence, and is called in this form a "plate." It is next passed to the crimpers, who again heat it to whiteness and run it through machines which twist the flat end into a "pod," or spiral of beautiful regularity. The "swedgers" seize it now, and again under the influence of the blowpipe the steel is soon red hot, when one blow from a powerful drop fashions the square end into a shank properly bevelled for the bit brace; again it is heated and passed under another drop which stamps on its shank a figure telling the size of the hole it will bore when finished. Once more it endures the fiery ordeal and, glowing red, passes through the heading presses, which, with a hug and a squeeze, crush two inches of the twisted end into a mass in which you faintly discern the point spurs and cutting edges of the future bit. It is next carried into the annealing room, where, with thousands of others, it is buried beneath heaps of charcoal and thoroughly baked until the steel is well softened or annealed. Next it is pickled for several hours in vats containing a strong solution of sulphuric acid, which eats off all the scale left by the many previous heatings in the forges. The bit now passes into the machine room where the rasping machine cuts off all superfluous stock in the head, forming rude cutting edges. The milling machine cuts the point smoothly to the correct bevel, ready for the screw to be made upon it. The levelling machine smooths the bottom of the blades, the facing-back machine cuts the edges of the blades straight, the screw-cutting machine forms the threads on the point, and the sizing machine cuts the boring end to the exact diameter required. And still the bit is only about half made. You pass into another department, and here you see long rows of skilled mechanics seated upon high stools, each man having in front of him a heap of bits and a lot of files of various sizes and forms, known as "square," "round," "flat," "half-round," "humpback," "ground-off" and "leather edge," and each of these is used in turn to form and smooth the various parts and cutting surfaces of the bit. The squeaking of a hundred files of almost as many sizes and shapes fills the air with shrill notes and sets your teeth on edge. You pause for a moment to watch a couple of men who, seated in front of tiny forges, are heating the bits to a cherry red color and then dipping them into dishes of oil and water. You learn that they are tempering them to the proper degree of hardness for cutting. You also learn that although they can control the temper of the steel, they cannot control their own—when they burn their fingers. You now open a door lettered, "Polishing Room" and start back at the scene which meets your gaze. A living reproduction of Dante's dream is before you. Men with faces blackened by charcoal dust and emery stand in long rows, while a sheet of fire five or six feet long plays from the hands of each, lighting up their blackened features and making them look like veritable demons. Each man holds in his hand a bit and presses it upon the polishing wheel, which makes many thousand revolutions in a minute, causing by its friction a great sheet of sparks to fly out in front of the operator. You behold the many different processes of finishing as the bits pass on from one workman to another down the row, until at last they look as bright as burnished silver. In the packing-room many men are sharpening the finished bits, and a few inspectors are examining them with magnifying glasses to see if they can detect any scratches that have been left by the polishers.

The Editor and the Bear.

For some time Mr. A. Smiffe, one of our oldest residents and the genial leader writer for the Bobcaygeon *Independent*, noticed that some thief was paying marked attention to his swill barrel to the detriment of the pigs he was fattening for his Christmas dinner. Mr. Smiffe determined to catch the culprit in the act, and a few nights ago secreted himself at a convenient point for observation. Presently a large bear shuffled up and plunged his head into the barrel, whereupon Mr. Smiffe seized him by the hind legs, lifted him up to a vertical position, and held him there until he was drowned. It was hard and risky work, but Mr. Smiffe is a powerful man, and is naturally proud of his odd feat, as well as of his two pairs of bear feet.—*Haliburton Cor. Lindsay Post.*

John Mara, aged 14, was found unconscious in the street at Hoboken, N. J., on Thursday night. He is suffering from nicotine poisoning, having smoked too many cigarettes.