About the House.

SWEETHEART AND WIFE.

If sweethearts were sweethearts always,
Whether as maid or wife,
No drop would be half so pleasant
In the mingled draft of life.

But the sweetheart has smiles and blushes,
When the wife has frowns and sighs,
And the wife's have a wrathful glitter
For the glow of the sweetheart's eyes.

If lovers were lovers always,
The same to sweetheart and wife,
Who would change for a future of Eden
The joys of this checkered life?

But husbands grow grave and silent,
And care on the anxious brow,
Oft replace the sunshine that perished
With the words of the marriage vow.

Happy is he whose sweetheart
Is wife and sweetheart still;
Whose voice, as of old, can charm him;
Whose kiss, as of old, can thrill.

Who has plucked the rose to find ever
Its beauty and fragrance increase,
As the flush of passion is mellowed
In love's unmeasured peace?

Who sees in the step a lightness;
Who finds in the form a grace;
Who reads an unaltered brightness
In the witchery of the face

Undimmed and unchanged. Ah, happy
Is he crowned with such a life;
Who drinks the wife pledging the sweetheart,
And toasts in the sweetheart the wife.

THE POTATO.

We do become so tired of seeing the same dish before us every day. Now a plain boiled potato is a good old standby, but variety, it is said, is the spice of life, so here is a little of the "spice."

Scalloped Potatoes.—Cut cold boiled potatoes very thin and small, and place a quart of them in layers in a baking dish, season each layer with salt, pepper, and little bits of butter. Cover with a gill of cream or very rich milk, grate bread crumbs over the potatoes, season again with salt and pepper, and small bits of butter, and bake until thoroughly heated and brown.

Saratoga potatoes.—Pare two large potatoes, and cut in very thin slices into a pan of cold water; let them stand ten minutes; take out a few pieces at a time, dry them on a soft cloth, and throw them into boiling lard; when a light brown, take up with a skimmer, and lay on brown paper to drain; dredge with salt, and serve hot.

Potatoes and Cheese.—Cut five or six boiled potatoes into thin slices and put them in a baking dish. Take two tablespoonfuls of butter and melt in a granite saucepan; add to it one tablespoonful of flour, and stir until thoroughly blended. Then add one-half pint of soup stock and the same amount of milk. Stir until well mixed then remove from the fire, and add two-thirds of a cupful of grated cheese, three eggs, well beaten, salt and a speck of cayenne pepper. Pour the whole over the sliced potatoes; sprinkle bread crumbs over the top, and put in the oven to brown. Serve in the dish in which they were baked.

Potatoes Viennoise.—Boil eight peeled potatoes with one tablespoon of salt, in one quart of water; when done drain and press through a potato press;, mix with one even teaspoonful of salt, one-half even teaspoonful of pepper, two ounces of butter, the yolks of three eggs, one-half gill of cream, and four ounces of grated Parmesan cheese. Mix well, and form the mixture into round balls the size of an egg. Sprinkle some flour on a pastryboard, roll the potato into long shapes, thick in the centre and pointed at the ends; brush them over with beaten egg; make two slanting incisions on top of each, lay them in a buttered pan, brush over again with egg, and bake to a fine golden color in a hot oven.

SOME GOOD DESSERTS.

An entire dinner may be spoiled by the dessert. For the benefit of the cook who has to cater to a family of epicures the receipts for the following desserts are given.

To serve a melon of ice-cream first line a melon mold with pistachio ice-cream. Then fill the centre with pink ice-cream mixed with a few small chocolates to represent seeds, or the mold may be filled with French ice-cream, which is yellow and mixed with blanched almonds. When the melon is unmolded sprinkle with chopped brown almonds. This will have somewhat the effect of a rind.

Pineapple mousse make a dainty desert. To prepare it the following ingredients are required: One pineapple, powdered sugar enough to make it very sweet, three level teaspoonfuls of vanilla, three tablespoonfuls of jamaica rum and three times the bulk of the fruit in whipped cream. Peel the pineapple and cut a few slices of it into a bowl. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and a very little rum. Cover and set away until wanted. Grate the rest of the pineapple into an earthenware bowl. Add to it the vanilla, rum, and sugar. Set the bowl over ice and stir until very cold. Meanwhile have ready beaten over a pan of ice the cream, which should then equal three times the bulk of the fruit. Fill an ice-cream mould with the mixture. Fit the cover on closely, cover the joint with a strip of muslin dipped in melted butter to keep out the salt. Pack in salt and ice, the layers of ice being three inches and salt one inch deep. Cover with a carpet and set away in a cold place for three hours at least. When ready to serve turn out the cream, place around it the slices of pineapple and its syrup and serve.

Plum pudding glace is not very good for epicures troubled with indigestion, but it makes an exceptionally good dessert. First make a chocolate ice-cream using the French ice-cream mixture. Have a scant three-quarters of a pound of mixed fruit, composed of seeded raisins and currants boiled until plump, thin slices of citron and a few candied cherries. Pour over them a little sherry and let them stand long enough to be a little softened. When the cream is frozen drain the fruit and mix it with the cream, turning the dasher for a few minutes to get it well mixed, and again hardened. Place it in a melon mould and pack in ice and salt. Serve with sauce placed around it on the same dish. Make the sauce of whipped cream, flavored with a little kirsch or brandy.

FASHION FANCIES.

Some of the new bicycle costumes show white cloth facings.

Graduated rows of braid look extremely well on the skirt of a street gown.

The very latest designs in new umbrella handles are of mother-of-pearl.

A combination of black velvet ribbon and white lace promises to be the rage.

Lace and chiffon are used together on stylish waists, the chiffon being put under the lace in most cases.

Extremely small waists are no longer the fashion, as the average corset now measures from twenty to twenty-one inches.

Spring capes bid fair to be gorgeous affairs, as lace, embroidery, jet, spangles, and elaborate neck ruchings all enter into their make-up.

Two skirts for one bodice is an innovation, but one likely to gain ground, and the additional cost entailed can be trusted to keep them from being as universally popular as the extra waist.

Parasols of embroidered grass linen promise to be popular in conjunction with waists and costumes of this material.

China silks, with all-over Persian patterns, are not very expensive, yet they make very useful and dainty gowns when lined with nuns' vailing.

The latest skirts are flat in front and over the hips, full in the back and the gores slanted on one side only.

Blouse bodices are made with apron bib fronts, and are especially effective in waists of Persian velvet, the bib being of satin embroidered with jet and spangles.

For a fashionable coat the skirts, sleeves, and coat itself should all correspond as to material, while the vest may be wide or narrow, and of a second material.

Fichus are in every shape and size possible, and are made of white silk muslin with plain ruffles of the same with selvidge edge, or of cream-white Brussels net with insertions and edging of Valenciennes lace.

Lace jackets are made to wear over silk foundations, and some of the big stores in New York are importing jackets of lace woven by hand in three or four pieces, to be set together.

A simple coat has the godet basque and belt, and is especially becoming to slight figures. The wide collar is cape shape in the back, and the soft full vest is of fine tucked lawn trimmed with rows of narrow Valenciennes edging.

THE WEDDING RING.

Where did the custom of wearing a wedding ring originate? According to the Latin writer, Aulers Gellius, it came from Egypt, and was subsequently adopted by the Greeks and Romans. In choosing the fourth finger of the left hand the ancient Egyptians were influenced by a belief to the effect that a very acute nerve put this finger in direct communication with the heart. It is also very probable, says a historian, that the old Egyptians attributed the fourth finger to Apollo—the sun—to whom gold was consecrated, hence the ring or symbol to the deity. Some people have wondered why the index has not been chosen. The Hebrews had done so, and the custom has been handed down to us in the persons of the Roman Catholic Bishops, who wear a ring on the index of the right hand. In Germany the ring is worn on the fourth finger of the left hand during the engagement, but is placed on the right hand after marriage. In the Greek Church the priest slips the wedding ring on the fourth finger of the bride's right hand. In Spain, instead of being a simple band of gold, the wedding ring is inlaid with precious stones, and resembles any ordinary ring. It is worn with less regularity than in other countries, and always on the fourth finger of the right hand.

SUPERSTITION.

In a beautiful trousseau recently made for a bride by a noted Paris dressmaker a queer discovery was made by chance. It was necessary to make a slight alteration in one of the "lovely creations," when the sewing woman discovered a long silken hair carefully stitched into the gown. There could be no mistake; the single hair had been purposely sewed in the garment. The sewing woman smiled and clapped her hands—she had been employed in a Parisian dressmaking establishment—and then she explained the riddle.

"It is a superstition," she said. "When the sewing girls in the different apartments and the girls behind the counters learn that the house has received an order for a big trousseau, they besiege the head dressmakers and ask them to stitch into the wedding gown especially a single hair from their heads. This hair is so fine that it is easily concealed and cannot in any way mar the beautiful wedding gown. The head dressmakers very often humor the girls.

"The girls when they go home at night tell their girl friends that a hair from their heads had been stitched into the wedding gown of Miss So-and-So, and the lucky one is immediately envied. She will be married very soon, her associates say.

TOWELS FROM BLOTTING PAPER.

The most curious use to which paper is to be put is that suggested by the recent patenting of a blotting paper towel. It is a new style of bath towel, consisting of a full suit of heavy blotting paper. A person, upon stepping out of his morning tub, has only to array himself in one of these suits, and in a second he will be as dry as a bone.

THE RICH NITRATE KING.

HIS EARLY LIFE AND HOW HE MADE HIS MANY MILLIONS.

English Monte Cristo—How the Dead Man Created a Unique Position for Himself by the Magic Use of His Millions—His Wonderful Palace.

Colonel John Thomas North divided the honours with Gladstone, Wales, Cardinal Vaughan, Salisbury, and Rothschild of being one of the foremost men in England, says the New York World. The fiction of the Count of Monte Cristo reads as much like fact as the life story of this wonderful production of modern money-making possibilities. Colonel North was born in a village of Yorkshire, near Leeds, January 30, 1842. His father was a Church warden, but for his limited income he depended on the sale of coal. There was nothing especially remarkable about the boyhood of North. He was a healthy, rather stolid Yorkshire lad, and at the age of 15 he had a meagre Common school education. At that age he was apprenticed to the firm of Shaw, North and Watson, of Leeds, the North of the firm being a cousin of his father. He remained with this firm for eight years, and then obtained a responsible position with the big Fowler Locomotive and Steam Plough Works, of Leeds. He was then earning an income sufficient to support a wife comfortably, and he married Miss Jane Woodhead, daughter of the town councillor and Conservative chairman of Leeds.

A few months after his marriage his father died. Young North refused to take his share of his father's estate, leaving it all to his widowed mother. Soon afterwards he sailed with his young wife for the west coast of South America. He first found work as an engineer in Carrizal, Chili, for a railway company. During eighteen months he devoted himself with unflagging industry to his profession.

THE VAST NITRE BEDS

of Peru were now beginning to be talked about as a good field for speculation. They attracted the attention of the young engineer, and he left the employ of the railroad and hurried to Peru. He acquired a practical knowledge of the art of producing the nitrate from the raw material. Lying imbedded in the sand of the coast of Peru was a coarse material called calishe, which was much used by the natives for fertilizing. From this material, by boiling and evaporation, the nitrate of soda of commerce is produced. For such worn-out soils as those of England and other old European countries the effect of this comparatively new fertilizer was marvellous. So he began in a small way to purchase nitrate, and continued it for twenty years. Finally, he was able to erect factories of his own, and built lines of railway to each. Then he connected them all with one marvellous railroad across the slopes of the Andes, from Pisagua to Iquique, two ports from which the wonderful nitrate is shipped to the fields of agriculture in Europe. Then he needed ships, and he built them. Long before he came into any prominence in England he was known in all South America as the "Nitrate King."

Just before the war broke out between Chili, Bolivia, and Peru, Col. North, having made a vast fortune, returned to England. He had, however, set on foot immense commercial enterprises in Pisagua, Iquique, Tarapaca, and other points on the west coast. While he was in England the railways in the nitrate fields, which the Montero Brothers had financiered, became involved, and an effort was made by their agents to raise in London £70,000 to pay off a mortgage. Col. North waited until the agent came to him, and then said in his quick way:—

"I will make you an offer, but it to be accepted or rejected before you leave this room. I will give you £95,000 for your interest in the road."

The agent asked for time to consider. Colonel North turned the key in the door.

"Yes, or no," he said, "before you leave the room."

"Yes," said the agent.

The solicitor was sent for, the deed was drawn, and Colonel North became the controller of the railway system. Everything he touched

TURNED TO GOLD.

He made money for himself and for all who were associated with him. By a daring purchase of guano in Chili he made $500,000. As a result of the way Tarapaca became Chilian territory, Colonel North went out again, remained ed there five years, and then returned to England with an interest in nineteen different companies, which he had formed. Gradually he got more and more control of them, until at the time of his death his only partner was Mr. Jewell, the English Consul at Iquique. During the last Chilian revolution Colonel North's vast interests were put in great jeopardy, for he openly espoused the cause of the insurgents, and spent millions in their cause. When Balmaceda was overthrown Colonel North got more concessions from the Government he helped to establish, and he made millions upon millions. His wealth at the time of his death has been variously estimated at between $100,000,000 and $150,000,000. When Colonel North had become one of the richest men in England he set about making for himself a social position. He went down into Kent, and with a few millions acquired the magnificent estate of Eltham. He bought with it all the historical associations necessary. Here John of France wooed the daughter of his captor; here Richard II. welcomed Leo of Armenia; and here Henry IV. married Joan of Navarre. The greatest landscape artists of Europe laid out his grounds, the gardens of the tropical lands were ransacked to enrich his conservatories, and the ancient galleries of all Europe contributed to his art collection. The bluest blood of the most famous studs of England was bought for his stables, and his hounds were picked from the noblest kennels of Great Britain.

Then Colonel North gave a ball. He had already secured the friendship of the Prince of Wales, and he gave the nobility of England such a ball as they had

NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

So many of his millions he chose to spend for social recognition of the sort that the Prince's patronage could give were laid out with the same wisdom and discretion with which they had been acquired. Colonel North became a prominent figure on the turf, and he had one of the best strings in England. Many of the mose aristocratic trophies were won by the rich Commoner. In 1893 Colonel North sent over a stable of race horses to this country in charge of Colonel Thomas P. Ochiltree. The horses were poorly managed, and were not of the first-class. They won a few races, but the success of the stable was not what it would have been had the horses been properly placed. Nine thoroughbreds were sent all together, including Eltham Queen, High Commissioner, Iddesleigh, Rough and Ready, Arturo, and Sir Frederick Roberts. A jockey named Swash came with the stable, and introduced to America the celebrated "English roll" to the profound amazement of the "talent." Swash was a monumental failure. Colonel North afterwards promised to send another string of horses, but for some reason failed to do so. In coursing Colonel North achieved distinction by the ownership of Fullerton, the champion greyhound of Great Britain. He went in for hunting, too, and became master of the Mid-Kent hounds, one of the finest packs in England. He went in for military glory, and was made colonel of Tower-Hamlets Royal Engineers, a crack regiment. At the last general election Col. North stood for Parliament in West Leeds against Herbert J. Gladstone, son of the great statesman. He was beaten by 96 votes. Several years ago his only daughter, whose $5,500,000 dower had attracted offers from many of the noblest houses in England, created a sensation by marrying George Lockett, a young business man, of Liverpool. Colonel North's son, Harry, was graduated from Cambridge, and holds a commission in the Royal Munster Fusiliers. Mrs. North is a matronly woman of plain taste, unspoiled by riches.

CIGARETTE POISONING.

Dangers of the Excessive Use of Tobacco in Any Form.

George Burroughs, of Lambertville, N. J., died a few days ago of nicotine poisoning. A simple and matter-of-fact announcement this. The average reader will hardly stop long enough to read it, and yet to one who understands the hidden meaning of the simple statement "nicotine poisoning," it means a great deal.

It means that through the carelessness of parents a child of tender years was allowed to systematically poison himself with one of the most deadly of all poisons—a poison classed with prussic acid because of the minute doses required to kill men and animals.

NICOTINE IN ALL TOBACCO.

This deadly poison is contained in all kinds of tobacco. The poorer the grade of tobacco the higher the percentage of nicotine. The finer grades of Havana contain about 2 per cent. of the poison, while the poor grades contain about double that quantity.

There is little difference in the effect of tobacco, whether it is smoked, chewed or snuffed. As a matter of fact the man who chews a cigar absorbs far more nicotine than one who chews ordinary chewing tobacco. The latter is said to be much less poisonous on account of the admixture of harmless vegetable matter.

PARTICULRALY BAD FOR YOUTHS.

There is a case recorded where death followed the chewing of half a cigar. Adolescents are particularly susceptible to nicotine, as is evidenced from the frequent accounts of poisoning as a result of cigarette smoking. The cigarette appears so mild and innocent that children take to it kindly. The beginner does not as a rule suffer the tortures which usually follow a "first cigar."

The danger of poisoning by cigarettes is not so much from the smoke of the burning paper and tobacco; it lies principally in the moist and soggy end of the cigarette which is held between the lips.

DANGER OF CIGARETTES.

This end becomes saturated with saliva, and the tobacco parts with its poisonous element, which is promptly absorbed by the tongue and the membranes of the mouth and throat.

When a boy is allowed to smoke from one to three or more packages of cigarettes daily the injurious effect of the poison soon become apparent. He appears depressed, complains of nausea and loss of appetite, is nervous and irritable, and his heart acts in an irregular manner. It may even be enlarged or dilated as a result of the constant irritation produced by the poison in his system.

In the typical cigarette fiend one may find any one of the following conditions: Catarrh of the throat, nose and larynx, usually of a chronic nature; catarrh of the stomach, palpitation of the heart, and various disturbances of vision.

THE VISION DIMMED.

The latter are frequently of a very serious character. It is said that acuity of vision is sometimes reduced to one-third of the normal.

Medical authorities are agreed that children should not be allowed to use tea, coffee, beer and wines.

Tobacco, and particularly cigarettes, should be added to this list, not only added to, but placed at the head, for the weed is capable of inflicting more injury of a serious character than all of the other articles put together.

In France, bicycles are taxed at the rate of about $2.25 each per year; the tax yields about $400,000 per annum.

CHILD INVENTORS.

Instances Where Child Minds Have Conceived Valuable Ideas.

That many children have great ingenuity of mind in fashioning toys of various kinds is well known. That they have very frequently turned this quality to good use in the invention and construction of some of our most useful mechanical appliances is attested by the following instance:

The children of a Dutch spectacle maker happened to be playing one day with some of their father's glasses in front of the shop door. Placing two of the glasses together they peeped through them, and were exceedingly astonished to see the weather-cock of the neighboring steeple brought within a short distance of their eyes. They were naturally puzzled, and called their father to see the strange sight.

When the spectacle maker looked through the glasses he was no less surprised than the children had been. He went indoors and thought the matter over, and then the idea occurred to him that he might construct a curious new toy which would give people a good deal of amusement. He did so, and Galileo, hearing of this instrument that was said to make distant things appear close at hand, saw at once what a valuable help it would be to the study of the heavens. He set to work himself on it, and soon produced the telescope.

A poor Swiss, named Argand, invented a lamp with a wick fitted into a hollow cylinder, up which a current was allowed to pass, thus giving a supply of oxygen to the interior as well as to the exterior of the circular flame. At first Argand used the lamp without a glass chimney, the invention of which important adjunct would doubtless have been delayed for some time had it not been for the thoughtless juvenile experiments of his little brother.

One day when Argand was busy in his workroom, and sitting before the burning lamp, this boy was amusing himself by playing a bottomless oil flask over different articles. Suddenly he placed it upon the flame of the lamp, which instantly shot up the long, circular neck of the flask with increased brilliancy. Argand did not happen to be the man to allow such a suggestive occurrence to escape him. The idea of the lamp chimney almost immediately came into his head, and in a short time his invention was perfected.

One of the early difficulties with the steam engine was that of condensing the steam in the cylinder. Savary dashed cold water on the outside, but Newcomen afterward invented a method of directing a stream of cold water into the inside of the cylinder at every rise of the piston. This was accomplished by two stop cocks, which were turned by hand, and the whole action of the machine depended on the attention of the person who watched these two cocks.

Humphrey Potter, a boy employed to tend one of Newcomen's engines, belonged to Mr. Beighton, found the constant watching so troublesome that he set himself to contrive a way by which the cocks might be turned at the right time, and yet allow him an opportunity of playing with the boys in the street. Observing that the particular moment at which the valve required to be opened for the admission of the steam was that at which the pump-rod end of the beam was raised to its highest, and that the moment at which the other cock required to be opened was when the piston rod end was at its highest, he saw that by attaching strings to the stop-cocks, and connecting them with various parts of the beams, the rising and falling of the two ends would turn the two cocks as necessary. This rude gear of a skulking boy was discovered and practically adopted, rods being substituted for the strings.

OIL ON THE WATER.

How the Angry Waves Are Calmed By This Simple Proceeding.

One of the most curious sights at sea is that of an oil-bound ship.

Every up-to-date ship carries oil tanks, the quantity varying with the size of the vessel. For instance, a steamer of 150 tons burden carries on an average 60 gallons of oil. This oil is the refuse discarded by the oil refining factories, and often consists of a mixture of whale oil, petroleum and vegetable oil. It costs about two pence a gallon, and a large-sized vessel can be well supplied for 20 shillings.

The oil is stowed in spacious zinc tanks, arranged in the hold of the ship to act as ballast. Each tank contains 50 gallons of oil, and an ingenious mechanical tap arrangement connects the with the outside of the vessel.

If a dangerous gale arises, and the ship becomes unmanageable and likely to founder, the sluices are opened and 20 gallons or more of the oil is allowed to escape into the sea.

The effect is instantaneous. However stormy the sea may be, the vessel lies in a gentle heaving mill pond. There is no further danger of foundering, and the oil moves along with the vessel for some time, often half an hour, after which it breaks up and disperses. The ship must slacken speed a little, and more oil is let out from the tanks. Enormous waves may bear down on the ship, but on approaching the magic oil circle they seem to melt away and pass harmlessly beneath the vessel.

Sailing vessels are not so often furnished with oil tanks as steamers. It is estimated, however, that over 200 vessels have been saved from shipwreck by means of the oil tanks since they were introduced a few years ago. It is only in cases of absolute peril that the tanks are resorted to.

Why should we be care-stricken? What business have we to be sad in the sunshine? We have nothing to do with the future, we have to do with the present only, and that even in the hour of trial we are by God's grace strong enough to bear.—Canon Farrar.