HIS QUEEN.

"Any noise," it read, "willfully made, or allowed to be willfully made; any unnatural, uncalled-for or unwarranted sound. . . that willfully disturbs the peace and quiet. . . or permits the disturbance of any person or persons in the peaceful enjoyment of their homes. . . may be punished, etc., etc.

"We have now to determine," continued the Judge, "whether the song of the bird here present constitutes a disturbance inimical to the peace and quiet of the neighborhood——"

The whites of Mrs. Baxter's eyes were alone visible; her teeth were chattering, her fat black cheeks had gone ashen.

"Fer de Lawd's sake, Jedge! For goodness sake, honey!" she moaned, showing symptoms of an immediate collapse.

"The lady is paroled. Take her away, Sergeant," concluded the Judge hastily.

"I ain' gwine ter be patteroled!" snorted Mrs. Baxter at the top of her voice.

But, being made to understand that she was free, she gathered up her guinea-blue skirts in one hand, and bearing the cage in the other, she sailed triumphantly out of the presence, followed by the admiring crowd.

As she reached the doorway the bird awoke from his assumed lethargy and forthwith proceeded to give an astounding exhibition of his powers. The mewing of cats, the crowing of cocks, the whistle of early news-boys, the popping of fire-crackers, the wheezes of hand-organs—all this poured from his throat in a rollicking medley that filled the musty court-room with breezy echoes. The delighted bystanders applauded the feathered performer to the echo.

Maybin looked after Mrs. Baxter's retreating figure, wondering whether he might not appease her wrath by a generous offering. "I must manage it somehow," he thought. "Good old soul! Looks like my black mammy at home. I am horribly ashamed of myself."

"I ain' told dat roomer nothin'," Mrs. Baxter was muttering, "an' I ain' gwine ter tell her nothin'. But I hatter move her out'n dat top flo' room an' shet dish yer bird's mouf, lessen I git patteroled!"

Maybin, sauntering homeward late that afternoon, became aware that something unusual was forward. People were jostling each other meaningly on the banquettes; ripples of laughter were running about and snatches of song; the very gamins wore an air of mysterious importance. He stopped to look over the heads of a group of these into the show-window of a bakery.

To be sure! King cakes! Of all sizes. Hollow rings, big and little; brown, crusty, shining, sweet-savored!

"It is the Epiphany—Twelfth Night, you know," he quoted mechanically, continuing his walk.

His room was blissfully quiet. A glance across the street assured him that the obnoxious cage had disappeared. The flowers were also gone, and the dormer-window was shut. The panes of glass reflected the moonlight like spectacled eyes.

"Ha!" He breathed a sigh of satisfaction. He blew the accumulated dust off the legal cap, spread out his memoranda under the lighted lamp, and sat down, pen in hand. But to his astonishment he found himself utterly unable to begin the famous brief. He fidgeted in his chair, dipping his pen angrily in the ink and jabbing the paper with its point. The stillness was unnatural! He bent his head resolutely over the mass of notes piled symmetrically at his elbow. But his attention wandered. The silence was ghostly!

He got up and walked to the window.

"She's ole, an' she's lame in bofe her laigs, an' she's blin' in bofe her eyes"—the words rang accusingly in his ears. "Well! of all the brutes I have ever known, Kenneth Maybin, you are the vilest!" he summed himself up at length, with characteristic energy.

He made no further attempt at work, but stood staring at the denuded window-sill opposite until a sound in the street drew his attention. Looking down, he saw a line of figures moving along the dim-lit sidewalk; even as he looked, hand caught hand and the farandole danced its joyous way into an open corridor and disappeared.

Moved by a sudden impulse, he stepped to his traveling trunk, rumaged in the inner lining of a compartment, and drew forth from where he had thrust it nearly five years before a pocketbook containing a note or two, a crumpled rose, a faded hair ribbon, and—the bean!

It lay in the hollow of his hand the shining, heart-shaped trophy, as if she had but that instant dropped it there. "I make you my King, Monsieur,' he heard her murmur once more, his heart aching with the sweetness and the pain of that unforgotten past.

Fire! Fire! The sharp, insistent cry aroused him. He sprang to his feet, and the next moment he was rushing down the stairs. Dense volumes of smoke were pouring from the windows of Mrs. Baxter's house.

The street was filled with people shouting, gesticulating, rushing about aimlessly and tumultuously. The fire-engines were just arriving upon the scene.

"Where is she?" he shouted, dashing through the crowd to where Mrs. Baxter stood, paralyzed on her own doorstep. "The lame lady? The blind lady? Where is she?"

"De lame—O Lawd A'mighty! de blin'——"

"Where is she, you idiot?" roared Maybin, shaking her arm savagely.

"Upsta'rs, Mister. Up de back star'rs, young marster. Run, oh honey, fer de Lawd's sake, run!"

He was already groping his way up the crooked back stair, choked and half-blind by the smoke. He darted distraptedly from one room to another; all were empty. "I cannot find her," he thought despairingly. "She will perish, Old, lame and blind!"

At that moment a sound far above his head pierced the confusion. It was a bird-trill of almost supernatural sweetness; wooing, tender, dreamlike.

Guided by the sound, he leaped up another flight of steps and into a tiny gallery-room. He had barely time to fold its bewildered occupant in his arms, seize the bird-cage and stumble his way down the stair before mounting flames barred the exit.

Maybin carried the woman—and the cage—across the street into the small court of his own lodging-house. He placed both burdens on the bench and stepped back a little, blinking his smarting eyes.

The moonlight fell full upon her bare head and upturned face. She was thinner than she was wont to be; poverty and care had dug hollows under her luminous eyes; her mouth drooped like a grieved child's. But oh, how beautiful she was! how different from all other women!

'Odette!" The involuntary cry was one of rapturous amazement. It was instantly followed by a formal greeting. "I trust you are quite unhurt, Madame — Dansereau?" He smiled with an effort, and held out his hand.

Odette had arisen to her feet. Her black gown showed pitifully worn and rusty in the moonlight.

"You, Kenneth!" she gasped; then, as his words and their meaning penetrated her dazed senses, she laughed gayly, spreading out her hands after her old manner. "But, me, I am not Madame Dansereau!" she cried. "It is Grande Cousine who is Madame Dansereau. She was also Odette Le Breton, Did you really think?—oh, Kenneth!"

Emotion of a kind which fairly choked his utterance kept him silent. He stood gazing at her, his breath coming and going convulsively, his hands trembling. She mistook his silence; and clasping her aching throat with one hand, she steadied herself with the other on Chicot's cage.

"Mr. Maybin," she said quietly, "I am grateful to you for your kindness. But for you, I think I must have died. I was so frightened; and I could not find Chicot in the dark. I could not leave Chicot. He is all I have now, you know. And the room was a strange one—"

He opened his lips striving to speak but no sound came.

"I sew for my living," Odette went on, lifting her head proudly. "You have perhaps heard? My friends are very good to me. I am—very happy.' She was panting now, and her young voice broke suddenly. She sank back upon the bench and laid her arms about the bird-cage. "You see, I have Chicot still." She smiled up at him with the sidelong glance he remembered so well. Only, then her eyes were not dim with unshed tears! "I have only Chicot now!" she added, with a childish wail which unsealed Maybin's lips; a torrent of incoherent words leaped forth.

"Odette, forgive me! I was a brute, a foolish, unreasonable brute. But I loved you—my life, my soul! I love you. Forgive! Forgive!" he sobbed on his knees at her feet, kissing the hem of her rusty black gown.

"But I will not have you blame yourself," she interrupted passionately. "It was I who was foolish, unreasonable, wicked. But I loved you! Forgive! Forgive!"

She stooped to his embrace.

Outside the tumult continued, the labored puff of the fire-engines dominating the clamor of voices. Within the small court, pressed down and running over with divine moonlight, there was a moment of exquisite silence. Then, the Queen's Fool stirred on his perch, peered, out with curious eyes, and burst into an ecstasy of song.

It was the prelude to an epithalamium.

ART OF BREATHING PROPERLY.

Few People Understand the Philosophy of Respiration.

"It may seem strange enough," said a doctor the other day, "but really over 90 per cent. of the population do not know how to breathe. Nature kindly enough adapts herself to imperfect methods of respiration, as she adapts herself to the unnatural qualities of tea, coffee, or alcohol a man floods his system with during his lifetime, but all the same she does not approve. Why, one of the first things an actor or singer has to do is to begin to learn how to breathe before they can learn how to produce the voice properly. The first point is to fill the lungs. Very few people take the trouble to do that. As a rule, they distend them until the lungs are about three-quarters full and then they stop, leaving the base of the lungs unemployed, and naturally ready for any mischief, like most idle things or persons

"If people would only take the trouble to breathe properly consumption would no longer be heard of. Why is exercise so beneficial? Simply because in running, rowing or cycling people are obliged to fill their lungs to their utmost capacity to breathe—in short, as nature meant them to breathe. I have frequently recommended those whose business will not permit of any outdoor exercise to practice breathing for an hour in the morning and at night; exercise is not a necessity—breathing properly is. How to go about it: Watch an infant lying on its back if you want to see breathing done as it ought to be; or if you have got out of the habit of proper respiration, one of the first points to remember in learning to breathe is to keep your shoulders down; they are inclined to go up long before the lungs are filled. Another part is to get control over your lungs; fill them slowly, lying on your back if possible and feeling them fill; then empty them at will—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. Unless the mind has control of the muscles, which distend and empty the lungs, then it is no use trying to breathe. An hour's practice daily will do you more good than all the gymnasiums in the world. Yet, breathing is undoubtedly a lost art, and if we are to remain a healthy nation, it must be recovered."

IN ROMAN NUMERALS.

How shall we write 1900 in Roman letters? It has been fairly generally admitted that two ways are correct—namely, MDCCCC and MCM—and that the latter is preferable. Now a correspondent maintains that neither of these is legitimate. He says:

"The year 1900 should be written MDCD. One important principle of the Roman system is that the most valuable digit is placed first, and then others as much as possible of gradually decreasing value, till the required number is complete. Thus, MDCLVI for 1656. Another is that four similar digits shall not follow each other. The exception to this latter rule which is found on the face of a watch is, as is well known, of merely mediaeval origin.

"Now, as the number which we desire to write is 1900, we commence with MD. To account for the remaining 400 we must accordingly resort to the device of placing a detracting digit before a digit representing exactly that much more than the required value, in this instance 100. Our 400 is, therefore, expressed by CD, and the entire 1900 is shown as MDCD."

THINGS HE COULD REMEMBER.

Tourist—"How many children have you, Mr. Green?" Farmer Green, doubtfully,—"Well, now, I dunno exactly. There's Bob, an' Jack, an' Alice—wife, how many children are there?" Mrs. Green—"Seven; five boys and two girls." Tourist—"A fine family and a fine farm, Mr. Green. You've a large stock I presume." Farmer—"Aye! I've 173 head of cattle, 8 horses 781 sheep and 72 pigs. Then there's 315 geese, 18 turkeys, an' just 259 fowls.

About the House.

COOKING VEGETABLES.

It is very much easier to cook vegetables right than wrong—the trouble is, most cooks ignore the fine points of the process. One is never to cook a wilted thing, if it is in any manner possible to revive it. Whether things come from the home garden or the market, they are the better for standing in fresh, cold water until they are crisply plump. Wilted tissues always cook tough and stringy, to say nothing of lacking one-half the proper flavor.

Another thing worh knowing is the difference it makes to have the water boiling briskly when the green stuff goes into it. Still another is the importance of skimming. No matter how carefully things have been prepared, in boiling they will throw off waste and effete particles, which rise as froth, and, unless removed in time either cake upon the edges of the stew pan or encrust what is cooking within it. The skimming needs to be done within the first ten minutes after putting things over the fire. Do not put on lids unless there is extreme need of haste. This applies even to Irish potatoes, which are, however, very much better steamed than boiled.

Cauliflower.—Trim carefully and soak at least an hour. Take out of the cold water, plunge up and down in scalding water, then drop into briskly boiling water, and keep it boiling hard for twenty minutes. Take out the cauliflower, cut the heads into quarters or eighths, arrange the pieces neatly in a very hot deep dish, then pour over them a cupful of rich melted butter, made thus: Work a scant spoonful of sifted flour into a heaping spoonful of the best butter, add a dust of cayenne, a good sprinkle of black pepper, and half a cup of water the cauliflower was boiled in. Stir smooth and dip by spoonfuls over the cauliflower pop the dish into a hot oven for about two minutes, then take out, sprinkle thickly with grated cheese, and serve at once. Those who like toast with almost everything can vary this by putting a lining of toast in the dish. In that case it is better to add the cheese before setting in the oven, and to leave the vegetable there until the cheese browns slightly.

Second Way—Boil for twenty-five minutes then cut up and lay closely in a very deep covered dish, made very hot. Dot the cauliflower thickly with butter, into which you have worked the juice of a lemon, and black and red peppers. Cover at once, let stand in a warm place two minutes, then serve in individual platters, passing with it grated cheese and toast-brown bread.

Third way—Boil a large head twenty-seven minutes, take out, leave whole, let cool, then set on ice. Make a French dressing, using lemon juice instead of vinegar, and flavoring it liberally with cayenne. Set your head of cauliflower, stem downward, in a bowl, scoop a deep bit from the middle of it, and pour the dressing in the hole. Let stand for ten minutes before serving. To make it highly ornamental, use a clear glass bowl lined with lettuce, and lay around the white head small bright red tomatoes, one for each person, scaled and peeled, but not sliced.

Beans.—Wash the beans in two waters, then soak before stringing. Break them in inch lengths, and boil until tender in well-salted water. Drain them very dry, then put them back in the stew pan with a light seasoning of red and black pepper, and a tablespoonful of the best salad oil to every quart of beans uncooked. Set then over slow fire for five minutes, stirring most of the time. Turn out into a hot dish upon very crisp toast, and serve with either quartered lemon or pepper vinegar. Instead of the oil fat bacon may be used. Try half a dozen slices crisp without burning them, then put the drained beans in the bacon gravy, and stir well over the fire until it is absorbed. Serve on a hot dish with the bacon laid on top, along with hot corn bread and sliced cucumbers in vinegar.

Second way—Boil the beans after stringing until tender, drain and put in a deep dish with alternate layers of sliced onion and very thin bacon. Bake until the onion is well done. Serve hot with corn bread and strong pepper sauce.

Beets.—Wring off tops and tap-root instead of cutting, so the beets will not bleed too much in cooking. Boil until very tender, and be sure the water is not too salt, drop in cold water, peel and set on ice until wanted. They may be served half a dozen ways, sliced with vinegar, as a salad, or made very hot and dressed with melted butter and lemon juice. Do not mistake melted butter for drawn butter. Anything with flour in it spoils a beet. Melt the butter with a very little hot water, say a teaspoonful to the tablespoonful of butter. Beat in the lemon juice thoroughly, adding a dash of white pepper and cayenne, also a little sugar, unless the beets are very sweet. By choosing red and yellow beets of equal size and shape, slicing them in half lengthwise, and arranging them to alternate around the dish, you may make it very decorative. Another way is to make a rich meat gravy by stewing half a pound of round steak to rags in a pint of water, taking out the meat, then thickening the liquor with a tablespoonful each of butter and cream, and pour it over the sliced beets, after which they must be baked for ten minutes in a very hot oven. Dust with white pepper just as they go to table, and either serve with quartered lemon or squeeze a lemon over the dish.

ICES WITHOUT A FREEZER.

If ice is procurable, one can enjoy many frozen delicacies, even though not possessing a freezer, the substitutes requisite being two tin pails, one deep and narrow, one larger and rock salt. The narrow, deep pail should have a tight-fitting cover.

Lemon Ice—Grate the rind of 1 large lemon into a 2-qt. bowl. Be careful not to let any of the white stray in, by grating too close. Add the juice of 6 lemons, 1 qt. of water. Make very much sweeter than lemonade. Freeze as follows: Place mixture in the deep pail, put on cover, and put the pail into the larger one. Fill in the space with layers of pounded ice, alternating a layer of ice and rock salt. Continue to pack in this manner, even covering the top. Spread over entire pail, old carpet. Set in cellar 1 hour. In removing cover, be careful not to let any salt fall into the pail. To assure this, brush away the ice and salt which may be on top. With a long knife clean away the frozen flim on the sides. Beat all with a long-handled spoon for some minutes and freeze again. If not served when frozen, pour off the brine, replenish with ice and let stand till ready to serve. If you wish to serve on platter, dip towel into hot water and wrap around the pail containing the ice and the cream will slip out in form nicely. However, for ices, it is just as good form to serve in little lemonade glasses.

Pineapple Frappe—This is especially nice for fetes of all kinds. Select, if possible, one ripe Florida Queen pineapple. Shred with fork or grate in deep bowl; sugar and let stand till syrup forms. Add the juice of 1 large lemon, more sugar if necessary and 1 qt. of water, together with juice and pineapple; freeze same as lemon ice. Let stand, well covered with lumps of ice and old carpet, till hard. Serve with fancy cakes.

Peach Ice Cream—The secret of success with ice cream is frequent beating. Select 12 very ripe peaches. Pare and stone, crush in cake bowl, sweeten with powdered sugar. To 1 qt. of rich cream add 2 eggs, well beaten, granulated sugar, making very sweet. Place on fire, let come to boiling point. Remove and strain. When cool add 1 teaspoon of vanilla. Freeze as lemon ice. When nearly frozen, stir in the mashed peaches and freeze again. Occasionally beat well with a large spoon. Let stand till hard.

Orange Sherbet—Add the juice of 6 oranges and 1 large lemon, also 1 teaspoon of the essence of orange to 1 qt. of water. Sweeten, and add 1-2 pt. of rich cream. Mix all together and freeze as ice cream. Serve in lemonade cups.

GOOD TO KNOW.

When binding up cuts and wounds use linen, not cotton, as the fibres of cotton are flat and apt to irritate a sore place, while those of linen are perfectly rounded.

A little sugar added to the water for basting meat improves its flavor.

Never wash an omelet-pan; wipe it clean with pieces of paper, then rub with a clean, dry cloth. If the pan is treated in this way the omelets will be less apt to stick or burn.

Apple sauce is much improved by the addition of a tablespoonful of butter, and requires less sugar.

For a burn or scald make a paste of common baking-soda and water; apply at once and cover with a linen cloth. When the skin is broken, apply the white of an egg with a feather; this gives instant relief and keeps the air from the flesh.