LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

COOKING MEATS.

If the steamer were used in the preparation of meat for the table we should have less that is poorly cooked, or half cooked. During the past summer we have had a great deal of mutton, which was raised and fattened on our own farm. As we eschew pork in our own family, and can buy very little beef that we can chew at all, we con sider mutton our dependence for food in the most line. Several times the preparain the meat line. Several times the preparation of it has been commenced by persons at our table, prefaced by the remark, "I never did relish mutton before." If the Rural will give our method a place in its household column, it may induce those who adopt it to change their opinions in regard to this most wholesome and excellent article of diet:

Place a large steamer upon the stove with plenty of boiling water in it, and also a deep tin or earthern dish to hold the meat and receive the juices. We cock half a quarter at once. Rub each piece with salt and pepper; place it in the dish and cover tightly. From two to three hours will be required to cook it thoroughly. Keep a From two to three hours will be steady fire and try the meat with a fork after an hour or more ; the time must depend on the quality of the meat and all sorts require more time than be beef to be well

When quite tender, remove the steamer from the stove. Have ready a dripping pan with a little boiling water and flour to dredge the ment. Place in this the leg and other parts suitable for roasting; put in a quick oven for a half honr, basting it. quick oven for a half honr, basting it. Meantime the steamer should be placed where the cold will harden the tallow, which must be carefully take off. Every particle of fat may be thus removed, leaving a clear jelly, similar to that obtained from beef, and with properties peculiarly adapted to the weak digestion of invalids and aged people. One cup of this stock should be added to the gravy served with the roast, also butter and flour to thicken. The remainder makes an excellent soup with a variety of vegetables, or simply the addition of peas, meal, flour or corn-starch. The fat may be utilized for shortening, put with beef dripping; but do not allow it to wander about in the soup. George Eliot, in an article on servants, writes thus of soup making: "You desire soup but you desire it without fat. You are perhaps a genius; the world is in need of your new poem; or you are evolving a momentous theory, and the evolution of fatty acids within you is a serious impediment. An investigation showed that the cook handled the stock as a gardener would turn the soil when digging for roots; thus the particles of fat adhering to the spoon were mingled with the jellied soup beneath, she all the time stoutly affirming that there could be no fat in her soup, for she took it from under the fat. 'But there's stomachs that won't stand soup, and there's where it is,' was the lucid explanation offered." Ravenons a nos moutons :- Portions of the

meat not suitable for roasting can be usedsliced up cold for breakfast and tea. with any condiment preferred, and will be found very delicate. We think with nice breakfast rolls and cooked celery it furnishes an excellent morning meal. We cook celery as we do asparagus; cut fine, boil in water till soft, then add one cup of cream and milk with a spoonful of flour, pepper and salt. We prefer it to that so highly seasoned.

Girl's Life in India—Children Doomed to Perpetual Widowhood.

The day of her marriage she is put into a palinquin, shut up tight, and carried to her husband's house. Hitherto she has been the spoiled pet of her mother; now she is to be the little slave of her mother-in-law, upon whom she is to wait, whose commands she is to implicitly obey, and who teaches her what she is to do to please her husband
—what dishes he likes best and how to cook them. If the mother in law is kind she will let the girl go home occasionally to visit her mother

Of her husband she sees little or nothing. She is of no more account to him than a little cat or dog would be. There is seldom or never any love between them; and no matter how cruelly she may be treated she can never complain to her husband of any-thing his mother may do, for he would never take his wite's part. He husband sends to her daily the portion of food that is to be cooked for her, himself, and the When it is prepared, she places it on one large brass platter, and it is sent to her husband's room. He eats what he wishes, and then the platter is sent back, with what is left for her and the children. They sit together on the ground and eat the remainder, having neither knives, forks, nor spoons. While she is young she

is neverallowed to go anywhere.

The little girls are married as young as 3 years of age, and should the boy to whom the child is married die the next day she is called a widow, and is from hencefort doom. ed to perpetual widowhood; she can never marry again. As a widow she must never wear any jewellery, never dress her hair, never sleep on a bed-nothing but a piece af matting spread on the hard brick floor, and sometimes, in fact, not even that be-tween her and the cold bricks; and, no matter how cold they might be, she must have no other covering than the thin garment she has worn in the day.

She must eat but one meal a day, and that of the coarsest kind of food; and once in two weeks she must fast twenty-four hours. Then not a bit of food nor a drop of water or medicine must pass her lips, not even if she were dying. She must never ait down nor speak in the presence of her mother-in-law, unless they command her to do so. Her food must be cooked and eaten apart from the other women's. She is a disgraced, a degraded womar. She may never even look on at any of the marriage ceremonies of festivals. It would be an evil omen for her to do so. She may have been a high-caste Brahminic woman; but on her becoming a widow, any, even the lowest servant, may order her to do what they do not like to do. No woman in the house must ever speak one word of love or pity to her, for it is supposed that if a woman shows the slightest commiseration to a widow she will immediately become one her-

welf. It is estimated that there are 80,000 widows in India under 60 years of age.

Tasteful House-Furnishing.

Harmony of color is of the first importance in furnishing. Not that walls, carpet, curtains, chairs, etc., should be of the same color; that would make a room cold and uninviting. There should be two or three colors in a room, but these should harmonize. If one is conscious that she has no eye for color, she should consult some one of known taste before purchasing articles which, although by themselves might be desirable, would perhaps if placed with others spoil the effect of the whole, and be disappointment to be endured for years. A carpet for instance should not be pur-chased without considering what the color of the paint is; and so of the sofa and chairs, if they are upholstered. A carpet is like the background of a picture, it brings into effect the whole. Styles for carpets have entirely changed within a few years. Pat-terns of huge bouquets of impossible flowers used to be seen almost everywhere; now a very small, set figure, so small as to look almost like a plain color at a little distance, is in much better taste. This may be enlivened by a border of bright colors. lovely pearl and gray grounds, with vines of tracery of a darker shade, and bright borders of Persian patterns, are very desirable, and look well with almost every-The fashion of staining floor black walnut color for a yard or more around the walls, and having a square of bordered carpet in the centre, is gaining ground, and much liked for the pretty style and the convenience of taking it up for cleaning. It is also economical. There are now plain, increase convenience. ingrain carpetings, in solid colors, called "filling," which are used around these centre rugs, instead of staining the floor. We have seen parlors carpeted with dark, turquoise-blue filling, with Persian rugs over them, not in any set or regular order. The effect was very good.

A Good Sign.

A young man had declared love to a lady and asked her to be his wife. She hesitated, and he allowed her her own time to consider the matter. One evening, soon afterward, she had occasion to visit an aged relative who resided in the family of which the young man was a member. As she approached the door a sudden impulse caused her to pause. He might be at home, she thought, and she might encounter him. And seeing her there, he would probably imagine she called on purpose to see him. While she stood upon the doorstep meditating, she heard the oven door of the cook stove open, then a rustle of paper, as if it were thrown upon the table; then a firm, light step and the voice of her admirer say ing in a gentle way, "Let me do it, mother."
Then she knocked, and was admitted just in time to see the young man take some pies from the oven. This little circumstance aided the young lady in concluding what answer to make to the all-important question; and in married life she finds the young man an excellent husband and

Anecdotes of Tennyson.

Tennyson cannot say, as Byron said, "I awoke one morning and found myself fam-ous." It was years before he was recogniz-It was years before he was recognized as a poet by his countrymen. Even as late as 1850, when the Queen wished to make him Poet Laureate, it is said that Sir Robert Peel, then the Prime Minister, on being consulted, confessed that he had never read a line of the poet's poems. But he read "Ulysses," and then acknowledged that the new poet had the right to be England's Lau-

The writer of the article in Harper's Magizine, which tells the above anecdote, also narrates several others, and among them one about a comical criticism hurled at the poet by Carlyle, when young Tennyson was poor and struggling in London for recogni-

"There he sits upon a dung heap surrounded by innumerable dead dogs," said the dyspeptic critic with grim candor. He meant by "dead dogs" such poems as "Caone" and other Greek versions.

When, subsequently, the poet reminded him of his harsh criticism, he gave a kind of guffaw and answered,-

"Eh, that wasn't a very luminous description of you." But the best compliment the poet ever received was paid him by a London rough, who met him in the street.

"You're Mr. Tennyson," said the man, holding out his hand. "Look here, sir, here am I. I've been drunk for six days out of the seven, but if you will shake me by the hand, I'll never get drunk again." When the poet was younger than he now is, he used to wander for days in the glades

and woods, or take long walks at night.

Some people once told of meeting a mys terious figure in a cloak coming out of a

glade, passing straight on, and looking neither to the right nor to the lest. "It was either a ghost, or it was Mr.

Tennyson," said they.

A lady once asked a boy, who lived near the poet, if he knew Mr. Tennyson.

"He makes poets for the Queen," answer-

ed the bov, who had heard this explanation of "Poet Laureate." "What do you mean?" asked the amused

lady.
"I don't know what they means," replied the boy, "but r'liceman often seen him

The poet's first verses were written upon a slate which his brother Charles put into his hand also giving him a subject—the flowers in the garden. The slate was brought to the older brother all covered with blank verse. "Yes you can write," said Charles, giving Alfred back the slate.

Later on, his grandfather asked him to write an elegy on his grandmother, who had recently died. When it was written, the old gentleman put ten shillings into the

boy's hands, and said,—
"There, that is the first money you have ever earned by your poetry, and take my word for, it will be the last." The grandfather was neither a "prophet,

nor the son of a prophet," for the poet has earned many thousand pounds by his Tennyson was a pains taking writer in his early years. He allowed only matured work

to go to the press. He elaborated everything. A single perfect expression often cost him much time. His fame thus came slowly, but it is sure.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE.

A large portion of the State of Illinois, ike our Canadian North-west, is underlaid with a valuable seam of coal, which is tan ped by mining shafts at various points throughout the State. These mineral resources contribute in no small degree to the wealth, influence and prosperity of this State, and have been an important factor in the pre-eminence of Chicago, its commermetropolis. One of the most important of these coal centres is Braidwood, a town of about 8,000 inhabitants, invested with mela scholy interest as the scene of the mining disaster of February last whereby about one hundred miners perished through the flooding of the mines. There are eight-een shafts in the vicinity of Braidwood, one There are eight of which, belonging to the

CHICAGO, WILMINGTON AND VERMILLION

COAL COMPANY, I was permitted to examine by the courtesy of Mr. T. B. Corey, the energetic superintendent of the company. The entrance to the mine is marked by an extensive mound of waste clay and stone, which have been elevated from beneath, Immediately adjoining the entrance is the engine house, containing a large engine and six boilers. The receiving and weighing room covers the mouth of the pit, and consists of a ricketylooking wooden building elevated above the ground. It has the appearance of a two-story barn with the lower story knocked away and the upper one supported by posts. The trucks loaded with coal are first hoisted up from the mine to this room, then run upon scales, weighed and dumped into cars which stand upon the track beneath. As the coal is being dumped it passes over a large screen which sifts out the fine coal and allows only the large blocks to run into the

oar,
Our equipment for making this underground exploration consisted simply of a small tin lamp, like a miniature pot, filled with sperm oil. The spout held the wick, which burned with a steady light. Everything being ready, we stepped upon the hoist and years. hoist and were

LOWERED ABOUT ONE HUNDRED FEET

into the mine as easily and pleasantly as ir a hotel elevator. Here we found ourselves in a large dark chamber from which diverged a network of roads to the face of the mine. Selecting one of these, along which an underground cable railway was operating, we walked along it about half a mile. It was like walking in a railway tunnel. The roadway was earth, dry, smooth, level and well-beaten. The roof consisted of a solid layer of scapstone propped up by rough wooden posts about four feet long and six inches thick. Cross pieces were inserted above these posts in many places to strengthen the roof, and it was not unusual where the roof was bad to have it entirely ceiled with wooden cross pieces that it might be thoroughly secure. this tunnel road appeared to be of solid soap stone, but upon close inspection I noticed that the stone for about a foot high from the floor had been disturbed. In reality a space three feet high on each side throughout the whole mine had been originally excavated and the coal removed. This space was filled up loosely with stones cut away from the roof and with other loose matter found in the coal. Gradually the whole superincumbent strata of stone and earth settled down, exerting an enormous pressure upon the loosely filled in stone and waste, and reducing it from three feet to a layer of about one foot in thickness. The roof of the roadway, however, was prevented from settling down in the same way by the numerous props which supported it. This gave the roadway the appearance of a tunnel cut in the solid rock about six feet high and ten wide. At frequent intervals similar side roads bifurcate, leading in all directions, so that the whole mine, for a radius of about a mile on every side from the shaft, is a net work of these roads. The wall between the several roads were originally completely excavated by the removal of the coal, which was replaced by waste stone and clay. The settling down of the strata above and consequent pressure of the waste matter, give the walls their present solid appearance. We roceeded along the main road for about half a mile and then diverged into one of the by-roads, which are only four feet high, obliging us to walk in a stooping posture, We met numerous truck loads of coal, hauled along a tramway by small mules, driveu by boys. Small mules are necessary for this work and they are sought for through out the whole country, It is a weird sight to see these UNDERGROUND COAL TRAINS

The boy with lamp stuck in his cap and hands and face black with coal, looks from a distance like a spirit from the lower re-gions. The mule appears in the dim light to be of leviathan proportions. The roll of the trucks upon the tramway makes a loud rumbling which resounds like the blows of the Cyclops forging underground chains, All the environments are awe inspiring and suggest the agency of the Prince of Darkness. At length we reach the face of the mine, where the miners are at work. solid wall of black diamond glistens before us in the dark. In front of it are seated three miners, working with pick and shovel. They have made a deep horizontal incision or opening about six inches deepand several yards in length into the bottom of the coal seam. It extends about three feet into the coal, as far as the pick can reach. The layer of coal is now sufficiently undermined. The creaking and straining of the coal seam inspires the stranger with the fear that the whole roof is going to cave in. But his fears are groundless. Several heavy blows upon a wedge driven into the top of the seam where it joins the upper strata of soap stone are required to sever the coal, and it falls, scattering around in large blocks. These are then loaded into trucks and hauled to the opening by the mules. space, fourteen feet long by about ten wide, called a room, is thus cleared away, and props are placed under to support the roef. The waste stone which may have fallen with the coal is then piled upon each side of the room, leaving a sufficient roadway clear. Another room is then begun in the same way, by undermining the coal seam and the same process repeated. Three miners genwork in each room. though sometimes two are considered sufficient, according to the difficulty of the work. In this

way THE WHOLE FACE OF THE MINE is being constantly extended, the several darties of miners being placed at regular

distances, so that the rooms run into one an-There is, in fact, instead of a series of rooms, one continuous chamber, circling the extreme edge of the mine. This chamber is, however, not a parallelogram, but a circle, all its parts being equidistant from the shaft. These underground exca-vations may be likened to an enormous horizontal wheel. The central chamber at the mouth of the pit is the hub of the wheel, the roads radiating from this chamber correspond to the spokes, and the series of rooms constituting one continuous chamber in which the miners are constantly at work are represented by the rim of the wheel. Along this continuous chamber is carried the pure air from without for

THE VENTILATION OF THE MINE. Besides the opening at the mouth of the pit, there is another about a mile distant immediately above the room where the work is presently carried on and a large fan kept in constant motion at the first opening causes a saction which draws the air from the other opening down along this circular chamber and through the various roads to

the mouth of the plt.

The three miners in each room mine the coal and load it into trucks. For this they are paid 75 cents per ton. They are required in addition to keep their room and roadway to first parting in order, and for this are allowed 15 cents per ton. This gives them 90 cents per ton. Eight tons are considered a good day's work for three men, giving each \$2.40 per day. To prevent strikes, however, the company allows the miners in addition to the above terms forty per cent. of all excess in price which they obtain above \$1.75 per ton. The miners are not kept constantly employed, however, and in summer do not average work three days in the week, so that their earnings for the year are quite moderate. About 2,000 minersare employed by this company. The trucks when loaded are hauled away by mules in successive stages, each mule hauling the coal of several rooms to the nearest shunting place. There the trucks are made up into larger trains and drawn by larger mules to the underground cable, by which they are hauled to the mouth of the pit. The trucks are then run singly up-on the hoist and elevated by steam power to the weighing room above. One thousand tone per day is the output of this shaft when working to its fullest capacity. With that

TENDENCY TO COMBINATION. which is the characteristic of this age, the various coal companies of this State have themselves into an association to control the production of coal. No coal mined until it is sold. So soon as a sale is made the officials of the combination notify each of the companies comprising it of the respective quantities which each is entitled to furnish according to a fixed proportion, and the required quantity is forthwith mined by each company. No sales are made outside the combination, and each company shares every sale made. During the winter months all the miners work to their full capacity, but remain almost idle during the The product is bituminous coal, which deteriorates when exposed to the at-mosphere, and is therefore not moved until required for present use.

The value of the land in the vicinity of Braidwood averages one hundred dollars per acre for the coal it contains. Each company owns the land above its mine, and is liable to a fine of \$1.75 per ton for all coal taken from land belonging to anyone

He Was No Thief.

"Gentlemen," said an Arkansaw Colonel as he stood under the limb of a tree from which suspended a rope, "I must protest my innocence. I did not steal the mule. I am above petty theft. I know that you all have the interest of the community at heart, and I do not blame you; but there are times when we are all liable to be too rash. If I had stolen the mule, my gilt would oppress me until I would beg to be put out of the world in the most summary way." "Themule was found in your possession,"

said the leader of the mob. erv true, my dear sir.

"Did he jump into your lot?" "No, sir, I conducted him to the confines of my premises.

"Did you buy the animal?" "No, sir."

"Did you trade for him?"
"I did not."

"Then who stole him? Let down the rope, boys."
"Gentlemen, I hope you will give me a chance to explain. The mule in question

was the property of one of our distinguished fellow-citizens, Major Rulesberry. Some time ago the Major and I exchanged a few words of an uncomplimentary nature. intimated that the Major's blood would be highly satisfactory to me, and the Major said that my gore would please him mightily. Well, we separated thoroughly agree-ing with each other. The next day the Major and I met. I got what is vulgarly called the drop on him, and relieved him of the top of his head. He was riding a mule at the times and when he fell off I saw that he had no longer any practical use for such an animal so I took charge of him.

Major taking my horse." "I hope, sir, that you will excuse us," replied the leader of the mob. "We thought that you had stolen the mule. Your explanation is most satisfactory, and I hope you'll excuse us. Let us all take a drink,"— Arkansas Traveller.

Now, if I had dismounted in the way he did,

I should have interposed no objection to the

Electric Flannel.

A French scientific journal describes an electric curiosity which its editor has re-ceived from Dr. Claudet. The novelty is a specimen of electric flannel, which is claimed to be valuable in cases of rheumatism. The oxides of tin, copper, zinc and iron form nearly one-eighth of the flannel. A series of threads of the fabric is impregnated with these metallic oxides, and each series is alternately separated by untreated threads. The flannel thus prepared constitutes a dry pile, which has been shown by independent experiments of Messes, Drincourt and Porterin, both reputable physicists, to disengage electricity when in contact with the body, the surrent becoming more marked as the flanuel absorbs the moist products of perspiration.

RULER OF THE BLACK FLAGS.

Sudden Growth of the People now at War With France.

Liu Yuen Fou who was originally leader of a remnant of the Canton rebels (the Taepings).
is now over 60 years of age. He has a full is now over 60 years of age. He has a full face and manly figure. His beard and hair are like silver. His character is of the hereic order, combining in fair proportion sagacity and courage; and he possesses great administrative and organizing ability, by which he has gathered around him adventurous spirits from all quarters. Over twenty years ago, when the Imperial troops defeated the Canton rebels, Liu, driven to extremitics, took refuge in the northern borders of Annam. The King of Annam was feeble, and could not drive Liu and his gang out by force, so he sent them a messenger to offer them protection. This Liu accepted. At that time the Black Flag followers did

not amount to more than a few thousands, and they made a treaty with the King of Annam by which they were allowed to cultivate the wild country among the mountains of Tieu-tu-Chang on the understanding that they and the natives were not to molest each other. After three years of cultivation of the land they obtained still further recognition. Liu succeeded in gaining the favor of the King, who supwith oxen and seed for cultivation. Liu made it his object to draw people to join him by

KINDNESS AND LIBERTY.

His good name was published from mouth to mouth everywhere, and multitudes gathered to his standard. The Yellow Flags and the White Flags came in close succession, and many natives also gladly placed themselves under his protection. Liu made allotments of land to them all, that they might support themselves by farming. Thus the population grew and the extent of cultivated land increased. For more than 700 li (200 miles), east and west, there were continuous fields and farmhouses, and agricultural towns of grow-

ing importance.

The expense of maintaining such a large population was very great, and they were burdened by the taxation of the Annam Government; so, after a period of seven years, they took it upon themselves to refuse further paymene of taxes, and the King of Annam could not help himself. After this Liu undertook the government of his own territory. All matters of instruction and maintenance, all agricultural and military affairs, administration of justice, and public appointments were duly arranged by himself. Punishments were strict and severe. They had beheading, hanging, rattening, and beating, but no banishment or imprisonment. Each town had a civil and military chief appointed over it, who superintended the agricultural operations and military drill of a certain number of men. The youths were taught to head, but not to any great extent—only enough to enablethem to distinguish surnames and names, or to explain in a rough and general way.

THE COUNTRY THEY OCCUPIED

consisted of forest and jungle, with deep ravines and water-courses. The hills are infested by tigers and wolves. Wood gatherers never venture to ge out except in companies. But no other kind of wild beast is so abundant as the monkey. In the stillness of the evening, when no sound is heard but the purling of broooks, the monkeys come out in scores and hundreds monkeys come out in scores and numbreus, screeching and jumping, and playing and chasing each other without end. There is a tall tree called the monkeys' provision tree, about ten feet high, growing all about the hill. Its fruit looks like a pomegranate, but it is hard and harsh, not eatable by men. The monkeys, however, eat it with great avidity. When the Black Flags went there first their chief article of cultivation was maize, and in late autumn, when the maize was ripe, each monkey would go to the field and pluck a head and put it under his arm, then, with insatiable gread, pluck another and let the first one drop, and so last in its eagerness to take another. Acres of maize would be spoiled in this way in

of maize would be spoiled in this way in one night, until the people took measures to frighten the monkeys away.

Of late years the colony has enjoyed greater prosperity. The number of Black Flag people is over 80,000, of the Yellow Flag 60,000, and those of the White Flag over 30,000. There are also natives of the place numbering more than 20,000. young men from 17 to 24 years of age, amounting to 20,000, are all swarthy, stalwart fellows, accustomed to scour the forest and spring the gorges with the agility of monkeys. Therefore they are

FIERCE AND DARING

in the extreme; nothing cau stand before them, and, moreover, they are wonderfully smart and dexterous. These young men make a formidable army. At present the old Black Flags occupy the mountain pass, which forms, as it were, their inner stronghold. To approach this it is necessary to pass over a succession of fine preciptious mountain ranges, which stand up like gigantic walls sufficient to hinder even the flight of birds. There are also two great water barriers

which the Black Flags have constructed by diverting the course of the Red River, and strong guards are stationed at all points within hail of each other. Beyond all these barriers is Tieu-fu Chang, with its wide streets—a great commercial centre—the metropolis of the Black Flags.

In Tieu-fu-Chang there is a general yamen for the three Flags, and a separate yamen for each. Every person who wants to join them must give an account of his antecedents and of his connections, if any, with the neighboring people, and must state which Flag he wants to join. Then he is taken to headquarters and examined to his abilities and admitted or rejected accordingly. The fighting with the French has hitherto been outside barriers, und business goes on inside just as before, without any appearance of trouble or fear. Therefore all observers agree that Lin Yueu Fou is an excellent ruler.

Senator Mahone seldom wears an overcoat, and in the coolest weather can be seen on the streets of Washington with his Prince Albert unbuttoned.

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