

MOTHER'S MENDING BASKET.

BY ABBE KINNE.

Over and under, and in and out,
The swift little needle flies;
For always between her and idleness
The mending basket lies;
And the patient hands, though weary,
Work lovingly on and on
At tasks that never are finished;
For mending is never done.

She takes up the father's stocking,
And skillfully knits in the heel,
And smooths the seam with a tender touch,
That he may no roughness feel;
And her thoughts to her merry girlhood
And her early widowhood go,
And she smiles at the first pair of stockings
She knits so long ago.

Then she speaks to the little maiden
Learning to knit at her side,
And tells her about these stockings
Uneven and shapeless and wide—
"I had to unravel them out, my dear;
Don't be discouraged, but try,
And after awhile you'll learn to knit
As swift and even as I."

She takes up a little white apron,
And thinks of the woe of face
Of her darling when she came crying:
"O, mamma, I've torn my lace."
So she mended the child's pet apron;
Then took up a tiny shoe,
And fastened a stitch that was broken,
And tied the ribbon of blue.

The maiden has wearied of working
And gone away to her play;
The sun in the west is sinking
At the close of the quiet day,
Now the mother's hands are resting
Still holding a stocking of red,
And her thoughts in the twilight shadow
To the far off future have fled.

"O, where will the little feet wander
Before they have time to rest?
Where will the bright hands be pillowed
When the mother's loving breast
Is under the spring's blue violets,
And under the summer grass,
When over fall the autumn leaves,
And the storms of winter pass?"

And a prayer from her heart she utters:
"God bless them, my dear ones all!
O, it may be many, many years
Ere sorrow to them befall!"
To her work from the mending basket
She turns with a heart at rest:
For she knows that to husband and children
She is always the first and best.

THE WIDOW DURRELL'S MATRIMONIAL PLANS.

BY MISS H. MARIA GEORGE.

"I'm sure, Carrie, I don't know what better you could do," said the Widow Durrell, with a sigh, as she stood in the "smoke-house," or summer-kitchen, one May morning, with her sleeves rolled up, doing the semi-weekly churning; "and he's a good match enough for any girl in town."

"But, mother," said Carrie, throwing her sun-bonnet on a chair and proceeding to wash the greens she had just picked, "how am I to know what his intentions are? He may not want to marry at all."

"There, that's like you, Cad Durrell," groaned the widow. "Not know what his intentions are, and he's been coming here off and on these six months. Of course, Tom is anxious to marry. He's got a large farm, and ain't that kind of a fellow to fool round as some I have known."

"That may be, mother; but, supposing Tom Stapleton don't care anything about me, but does care for somebody else."

Mrs. Durrell stopped kneading the golden mass of butter, and looked her youngest daughter keenly in the face. All of the widow's girls, and there were four sisters, were allowed to be comely maidens, but Carrie was decidedly the flower of the flock in that respect, recalling Byron's description of Dudu:

"Large, languid and lazy,
And of a beauty that would drive you crazy."

She was tall and plump of form, with a velvet-complexioned face, soft, dreamy blue eyes, a tipped up, wicked little chin, lips just made to be kissed, and a swath of bronzy hair with sunlight shining in every fold and ripple. "Languid and lazy" she undeniably was—no vulgar haste about her. Her brisk, energetic mother had been heard more than once to wish that a wasp would sting Carrie; just to see if she could get around any faster. A wasp never did sting Carrie, and she never got around any faster.

"Who should he care for if it isn't you, I'd like to know, Cad Durrell?" ejaculated the widow, after a sharp glance. "If you want so mortally slow you might have been settled before this time, same as Phoebe and Sally Ann. But la! you'll grow gray first."

A ripple of silvery laughter issued from the sweet red lips, and the bronzed head was tossed aloft in pretty scorn.

"Why, mother Durrell, you certainly don't wish me to marry a man who doesn't want me! I think it's Lu that Tom's after, only he doesn't dare speak out."

"Lu shant marry him. I'll be bound," cried her mother, hotly. "You know that all along I've planned for her to be 'Squire Raynor's wife. She isn't strong enough to do the drudgery of a farm."

"But she's got faculty, you've always said that," said Carrie, with peculiar smile. "Yes, she's got faculty, which you hain't," declared the widow, emphatically. "Her bread never burns and her cream's sure to come butter. You never did have luck about such things."

Of all human afflictions, a daughter who seemed to be created without the boon of "faculty" was the severest to a driving New England housewife like Mrs. Polly Durrell.

A slim, gypsy-looking girl, with great dark eyes like sloes, and wearing a crimson shawl coquettishly over her black hair, entered the kitchen at that instant.

"Mother, 'Squire Raynor's asked me, and I am going—"

Mrs. Durrell looked up eagerly and a warm flush crept into her matronly face. "Of course you accepted him," she exclaimed.

"Oh, I don't mean that he has popped the question," said the girl, looking down with a pretty flush. "Why, mother, how you have upset me. As if he could ever care anything for me. He's only asked me to teach the summer term of school. Do you think I can?"

"Of course you'll take it," cried the widow. "Why, it's just the chance you need above all others, and Lu, if you are smart you can be mistress of Raynor Hall before Christmas."

Lu blushed hotly and drooped her scarlet face, while she gave her shoulders a very slight upward motion. She would have cared more for a look from a certain pair of eyes than for all 'Squire Raynor's wealth, his big house, conservatories, and all; but she did not care to tell her mother so.

"I think I will try the school at any rate," she said, after a pause, very thoughtfully. "It is eighteen dollars a month and board,

and I can walk the distance from here easily enough." And without waiting to hear her mother's answer she tripped away merrily humming "Auld Lang Syne."

"Don't you see how luck favors Lu?" said the widow. "She will win the 'Squire, and I don't know of anybody else who'd make him happier or a more careful housekeeper. I've always said she was cut out for a lady. Now, Cad, if you will get Stapleton to terms, I can go down to my grave feeling easy, as knowing that you are all settled."

"Oh, mother, you mustn't say anything about dying yet awhile," cried Carrie, affectionately. "And I am sure you need not worry about either Lou or me. We can take care of ourselves, I am sure."

"No woman can take care of herself," declared Mrs. Durrell, strongly. "She needs a husband and—children. I don't believe in single women at all. But it's no use talking with you, I suppose. Some folks don't know what's good for them," with which she gave a ball of butter a finishing slap, as if to give emphasis to her words.

Carrie quietly raised the greens in the water and smiled placidly, her temper not at all disturbed by her mother's imputation concerning her perceptions; but the widow would have had an apoplectic fit if she had known all that was in her daughter's mind.

Lu's school began Monday of the second week after the conversation in the summer kitchen, and Mrs. Durrell was never so proud in her life as when she saw her favorite daughter ride away with 'Squire Raynor in his elegant canopied phaeton.

"Mark my word, she'll ride in that as her own before the year's out," she said to Carrie, "unless she's lost her faculty."

Mrs. Durrell was one of those who thought that faculty had quite as much to do in getting folks married as sentiment. Faculty ruled the world to her mind.

Some three weeks passed, when one night Lu came home with a flushed face and anxious eyes.

"Well, it's my last day of school," she said, as she sat down with a sigh in the large rocker by the window and fanned herself.

"Why, what is the matter, Lu?" asked her sister.

"Squire Raynor's two boys are sick, and several others have left on account of sickness, and he told me this noon that he did not deem it advisable to continue the term any longer. It is small-pox, so Dr. Jones says, and there's a terrible panic."

"Dear me, the small-pox! Why, that's perfectly awful!" explained Mrs. Durrell. "Like enough we shall all have it, now you have been exposed. There's nothing like using every precaution," and the widow caught up the camphor bottle, and sprinkled them generously with its contents.

"I do hope it won't spread," murmured Lu. "I don't want to be pock-marked for life."

"Goodness knows, we don't want to be down with it, and haying coming on, and all the hired help to take care of," ejaculated her mother. "I can stand some things, but I couldn't that. I wonder how it happened to break out in the 'Squire's family."

"He and little Frankie were in Boston two weeks ago, and I suppose the boy took the contagion some way. It seems real hard for the 'Squire. All his servants have left him and he cannot get anyone to act as nurse for love or money. Not even Paulina Heath, the Poor Farm Hospital nurse, will risk her life at any price. He offered me five dollars a week to go up and do what I could."

"As if his children were anything to you!" cried the widow. "You'd been sure to have caught the disease and perhaps have died with it. You showed your good sense in refusing to go."

"Mother," said Carrie, very abruptly, "I don't think it's Christian to let those children lie and suffer and not stir hand or foot to save them. I think I shall go to Raynor Hall."

Mrs. Durrell gave a gasp of incredulous amazement.

"You go out to nursing 'Squire Raynor's children? You must be crazy, Cad Durrell!"

"I never was more sane in my life," replied Cad. "If he succeeds in getting no one else I shall go to-morrow. I am sure it is my duty."

"Fiddlesticks! It's a duty to take proper care of one's self, and if you go up there I shall know you are not in your right mind." And Mrs. Durrell leaned back with a hollow groan, looking as if she really had doubts of her daughter's sanity.

But Carrie was in earnest, and the next morning she went up to the great house, which seemed very still and deserted.

"Don't ever come back till you have had it and got well, for I won't have you in the house. It's running plump in the face of Providence, and that I don't believe one has a right to," said Mrs. Durrell, as Carrie rode away.

They were cold, cruel words, but the widow considered them eminently generous, and practical.

"Of course, she'll have it and die with it; it will be just her luck. I'd just as soon go and take a dose of strychnine."

Carrie had but little time to think of herself or anything else, save her two little patients. It was new work for her, but she had a kind heart and she was strong, and those qualities went a great ways. She made no mistakes, and she had a certain reserve power that made her services doubly valuable.

Frank and Harry Raynor were very, very ill, and for days there was small hope of their recovery. 'Squire Raynor hardly left the darkened chamber, and only to the nurses and the old physician did he speak a word. At the end of three weeks, however, the disease turned and the doctor pronounced the children out of danger.

"It is owing more to your care than the doctor's skill, Miss Durrell," said the 'Squire. "How shall I ever repay you?"

"You have paid me for my work; as for the rest, it was my duty," said Carrie.

"The others did not think it was their duty to risk their lives to save an old man's two motherless boys," returned 'Squire Raynor, sternly; "why should you have done so? You are an angel and—"

"Oh, no, 'Squire Raynor, only a very common piece of clay," answered Carrie, hastening away with scarlet cheeks.

But two or three weeks afterward, when Frank and Harry were out at play for the first time on the sunny lawn, and Carrie sat in the porch doing crochets, the 'Squire came out and gazed thoughtfully at the picture.

"Boys," said he, at length, "how would you like a mother, a real nice, new mother?"

"Oh, ever so much, papa!" cried Harry; "that is, if we could have Miss Durrell."

"Oh, you silly boy," began Carrie, but she was interrupted by the 'Squire. "You have heard their verdict, Miss Durrell—"

Carrie. You can make them happy, and—and I love you. Will you not stay, Carrie, my Carrie, and be mistress of Raynor Hall?"

—And before she had spoken he knew by the look in her eyes that she would not refuse him.

Mrs. Durrell was thunderstruck when she learned the news. To think that after all Carrie, who had no tact, no faculty at all, should have won rich 'Squire Raynor, the great man of the village. "Why," as she expressed it, "it beat all."

But the surprises were not all over, for Lu plucked up courage the same night to tell her mother that young Stapleton had proposed, and that, with her consent, they were to be married at Christmas.

"Go along and marry him if you want to," cried her mother. "Girls are the queerest creatures! I really believe you two have been conspiring against your poor mother, who had the trouble of bringing you into the world and has always done so much for you."

"Why, mother, it is no such thing," said Lu, going and kissing her. "Only we cannot send our hearts where we will. Love goes, you know, it does not come by calling."

For all this, however, Mrs. Durrell insists that her two youngest daughters must willfully and unwarrantably defeated her matrimonial plans.—Chicago Ledger.

Race Prejudice.

In the North American Review Gail Hamilton dwells on the subject of "Race Prejudice," a subject of never-failing interest to Americans—particularly to Americans of the Southern States. She does not believe that the amalgamation of the races is a matter that concerns the churches, even the Congregationalist churches, which are nearer to heaven than any other. The negro, she thinks, hugs his race prejudice as closely as does the Caucasian, and though no one knows what is to come, the white and black should at present be let to work out their salvation each for himself, leaving God to shape the destinies of the races. She says:

"If the races are providential, the race line is providential. If it is God who made the white man white and the black man black, it is God who made each choose to consort with his own. To say that Providence intended the race line to be perpetuated is not to lay to Providence the bondage, injustice, and anguish which have attended its perpetuation. It is abundantly worth while to throw life and treasure and national existence into the resolution that no human being shall be enslaved. It is better to die a thousand deaths than to do this great wrong against man, and sin against God. But it is not worth while to put even the contents of one contribution box into an attempt to secure by external pressure what is much better left to the working of natural causes, the adjustment of social relations. It is kicking against the pricks where there is no occasion to kick at all."

"Nor will it be bad discipline for the Congregationalists to tarry in Jericho till their beards be grown, and they have learned that while we have the right and are under obligation to demand in the South absolute political equality and civil rights for all, we have no right whatever to meddle with the social relations of the ecclesiastical affinities in the South; that we might just as reasonably refuse to help educate their ignorant masses unless the white will wear a three-cornered hat instead of a derby, as refuse it unless the white and black will go to the same church; that, in short, the pigments of Providence are not obliterated because we stubbornly prove ourselves to be color-blind."

How Bill Lit the Fire.

"Mebby you've seen my boy Bill hanging around here!" queried a farmer of a policeman at the Central Market yesterday. "He's a common-looking chap, a little bow-backed, and has red mittens, a blue comforter and a scared look."

"I saw such a chap about an hour ago, but he's a man grown."

"So's Bill. He's as big as anybody, but he don't know nuthin'." The other morning he got up to start the fire, and come to look around he couldn't find a match in the house. It's half a mile to the nearest naybur's, and what did that smart son of mine do? He put the kindling into the cook stove, tucked some paper under it, and then got down the shot-gun to try a brilliant experiment. He thought the flames of the powder would set the kindlings going and save him a tramp."

"And didn't it?"

"Why, the long-legged ignoramus never stopped to see if the gun wasn't already loaded, when, as a matter of fact, she had a big charge of powder and a handful of buck-shot already down. When that gun went off the report riz everybody out of bed in a twinkling, and away went all the glass in the kitchen windows. We haven't got the house fairly clear of smoke and ashes yet, while the charge of shot blew the whole back of the stove out."

"What did the boy do?"

"He was lying on his back on the floor when I got down. I got some water and put out the conflagration in his hair and eye-brows and goatee, and then I led him to the back door and gave him a lift which lit him over a snow-drift six feet high. I guess I was a little too hasty. I heard he came to town, and I thought I'd hunt him up and sort o' apologize."

At that moment Bill came around a corner of a butcher market, and the father held out his hand and said:

"Bill, you are the biggest fool in the State of Michigan, but you can come back home all the same."

"Do you want me to?"

"Sartin. You don't know 'nuff to chew gum, and it's a wonder you hain't bin bit by cats since you left home. Git in thar' and mind the team, while I go and price a new cook-stove."—Detroit Free Press.

THE FIRST STRIKE.

The Rebellion of the Factory Girls at Dover, N. H., in 1827.

The first strike among our working people, I think, was at Dover, N. H., in 1827 or 1828. The Cochecho works were established in 1820, and the operatives were a most entirely American girls, who deemed that weaving and spinning were better than farming, and became "factory girls" on the erection of the works at Dover Falls. A small factory up the river was No. 1, and the works at the falls were Nos. 2, 3 and 4, as I believe they are at the present time. Everything went on spinning and smoothly until the year of which I write. There were exactions on the part of the corporations that the independent spirit of the fair spinners and weavers could not brook. A rule was made that the great gate should be shut at bell ringing, and those who were late should go through the counting-room passageway to be marked for reduction of pay largely disproportioned to the delinquency. This gave great offense, other measures awakened opposition, and on a fine morning the mills were idle. Every operative was out, leaving the overseers to run them alone. They met at some convenient square, and, forming a procession, with a band, and bearing the American flag, they paraded the town, under a leader whom I very well knew a year later, and a stalwart manly guard of one for their protection. The corporation came down at once, the offensive rules were withdrawn for the time, and everything went on harmoniously. But there arose again threats of war between James F. Curtis, a new agent, and Mill No. 2. He was not a fortunate selection for the office, as he had been a sea captain, and endeavored to introduce ship's discipline among his crew of girls. It would not work, and a general irritation prevailed. The climax was reached when he ordered the windows of No. 2 to be nailed down. This was done over night, and in the morning, when they found out what had been done, and one of the loom girls had fainted, their anger knew no bounds. A strike in that mill was the consequence. I saw the excited crowd from an upper window opposite, and such a clatter of tongues has not been heard since Babel. Agent Curtis was sent for, and went among them, angry at first, but that bird wouldn't fight, and he came down to coaxing, begging them to return, arguing the necessity for the nailing down, which excited them the more, until he compromised the matter by allowing the windows to be opened part way. Other inducements were given, and they returned to their work, but during the altercation with him they had spotted his black coat with cotton locks until he looked like a new description of leopard.—Boston letter in Hartford Post.

Skinning Cattle by Electricity.

The depreciation in value of hides from what are known in the trade as "scores," "snips," and "cuts," says the San Francisco Chronicle, is large, and the introduction of improved labor-saving appliances for taking off animal skins without injury to either the hide or the carcass has been so slow and of so unimportant a nature hitherto that the thousands of persons engaged in the industry on this coast can not but experience a certain degree of satisfaction over the introduction in California of an appliance which would appear to be what the trade has been waiting for all along. The invention is called an electric siding-knife, and is, like nearly all other good inventions, simplicity itself, being virtually nothing more than a slight alteration of the Edison incandescent or are light, with the glass bulb removed. The knife in construction resembles very much the receiver employed in telephone offices, and, like it, has a double set of covered or insulated wires attached to the butt end of the handle, connecting through the body of the same to the cutting, or, more properly, the burning edge or wire, which is composed of platinum. The current is entirely under the control of the manipulator of the knife. After the hide is opened in the usual way with an ordinary knife the current is turned on, and the removal of the hide is begun by long sweeps of the sider. The principle is that of burning, as the platinum edge is brought to an intense white heat, yet the edge is so arranged and protected by non-conducting shields that it is impossible to injure either the hide or the carcass. In fact, the hide seems to be torn or pulled off by some unexplained force of the wonderful agent, electricity. It has been demonstrated that meat will hold its color better and longer where the electric knife is used, this being accounted for by the fact that the pores are closed by the action of the current, which seems to leave a thin, transparent coating over the entire surface. Another advantage is that the beef, after leaving the chill-room, never "sweats," as under the old system of removing hides. Aside from the increased speed with which the skin is torn off, there is another advantage in the use of electricity. It is stated that the value of hides is increased from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cent a pound, as the fleshy side is left as smooth and even as the inner side of a sheep's pelt.

One Better than Lubbock.

"I see that Sir John Lubbock has given the names of a hundred or so books that ought to be read to finish one's education," he said.

"Yes, my dear, and I've put them all down on the list for future perusal."

"Meanwhile, you might look over the grocery book for the last quarter. That's about finished me."

Kosciusko's countrymen think that all roads lead to Chicago, where 50,000 Poles now live.

HUMOR.

A HICKORY club is very good lumber to floor a man with.

The hen is the lay-dy of the barn-yard.—Merchant Traveler.

ARCHITECTURE is called "frozen music," but some buildings look as if the orchestra had been struck with a heavy frost when they were tuning their instruments.

Down in Pennsylvania, it is said, they have sociables where you can kiss all the girls you want to at five cents apiece. Pennsylvania is a good State for a poor man.

"What becomes of all the old boots and shoes?" asks an exchange. Look into your landlady's soap boiler. You will learn more by observation than by interrogation.—Maverick.

AMERICA—"What do the letters H. R. H. mean when applied to the Prince of Wales?" Englishman—"Such bloom-in-k ignorance! 's Royal Tighness, d'ye see?"—New York Sun.

"CAN you tell me how the word 'saloon' is spelt?" was asked a cockney. "Certainly," said the Londoner, with a look of triumph. "There's a hess and a hay and a hell and two hoes and a hen."

BURNS PARAPHRASED TO SUIT THE TIMES.

To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her,
And pitch right in and make your pile,
Without a thought of honor.

—Boston Courier.

THREE million bricks were used in Chicago last year. This does not include these worn in hats. The enormity of their mathematical computation is too much to tackle.—California Maverick.

"SHALL I help Bobby to another piece of pie?" asked Mrs. Hendricks, who was entertaining Bobby and his mother at dinner. "Yes, ma," urged Bobby promptly. "It won't hurt me any. It's nothin' but baker's pie."—New York Times.

CIRCUMSTANCES alter cases. A man will step up with a smile and settle an hotel bill as reasonable as jealousy without a quibble; but when he comes to bargaining with a poor widow to make a pair of pantaloons he will beat her down to starvation wages, and then make her wait for the pay till her children suffer with hunger.—Chicago Ledger.

A FASHION editress holds that "military muffs" will be all the rage this winter. An enterprising reporter, who has been making a tour of inspection of the officers' quarters at the P. esidio and elsewhere, as well as of the various city armories, says that no fears of a rise in price need be entertained, as the supply is more than equal to the demand.—San Francisco.

A PROMISING AMATEUR—Featherly (who is studying for a private theatrical entertainment)—"What does 'exit' mean, Charley?" Charley—"It is a Latin word, and means that you are to withdraw from the stage." Featherly—"O, I see; but wouldn't it be better if I were to say, 'I withdraw from the stage?' Some of the audience may not understand Latin."—New York Sun.

A DRUNKEN man strayed into a revival meeting the other night under the belief that he was in a Democratic primary. As he was staggering into a seat a reformed sot got up and began his experience by the striking remark: "Brethren, I spent four years of my life in jail." The drunken man straightened himself up and asked, earnestly: "Shay, shen perhaps yoush can tell me swesher it's going Democratic or not shlish electionsh."—Chicago Rambler.

A SOUTH YONKERS Sunday-school teacher was trying to explain to her class what the conscience was, but had some difficulty in making the scholars understand. "What is that small voice that comes to you after you have retired at night?" she said at length.

"Oh, please, ma'am, I know," quickly said one of the bright little girls. "Well, what is it, Dolly?" said the teacher, proud that her explanation had been so quickly comprehended. "Cats, ma'am."—Yonkers Statesman.

A RED-LETTER DAY IN HIS LIFE. Just four years old; but mark his royal air As down the village street he takes his way, His head erect; a consciousness is there Of power that he possessed not yesterday.

Whence springs the pride that here we see displayed? Has he been made a present of a box of toys? No; the discovery he just has made That he can whistle like the other boys.

Ah! who can tell the happiness he feels! The bubbling joy, the unalloyed delight! For weeks to come he'll whistle at his meals And whistle when he goes to bed at night.

—Boston Courier.

A SMALL Somerville boy goes frequently to a neighbor's house to buy fresh eggs. He is always given eggs of the Plymouth Rock variety, which have a shell of a chocolate hue. On the last occasion that he was sent after eggs three of the ordinary white-shelled variety were given him with the Plymouth Rocks to make out the dozen.

He received them with a great deal of suspicion, and, a few moments later, rushed into the presence of his mother, highly excited: "Oh, mother!" he cried, "what do you think? They've cheated us! They've given us three that ain't ripe."—Boston Record.

VITAL statistics lately published show that in Germany the average life of men has increased during the last thirty years from 41.9 to 43.9 years, or 5 per cent. In women the increase is given at 8 per cent, the advance being from 41.9 to 45.2.

LOVE is said to be the motive power of the world, and yet fifty-six women out of every ninety-two will stick to it that a well-seasoned broom-handle is more reliable than moral snasion for immediate results.—Chicago Ledger.