

MOTHER'S APRON STRINGS.

When I was out a verdant youth I thought the truly great Were those who had attained, in truth, To man's mature estate.

SUGAR OR SALT.

BY EYE JOHNSON.

It was an old-fashioned house, in the suburb of an old-fashioned town. Nancy Moore stood upon the porch and watched the carriage until it disappeared around the bend near the bridge.

Mamma and papa are off for the day, and I may work my own sweet will while they are away. There's a rhyme to begin with, you silly thing. They will be gone until near five, and Cousin Hal is coming home with them to tea.

Springing up, the happy girl took down a huge gingham apron from a convenient nail, and after donning it, rolled her sleeves above her dimpled elbows.

Two cupsful and a half of grated potato, she said, as she selected tubers, "and if I have any over I shan't put it in as I did last time. Strange how easy it is to spoil a nice dish by not following the directions implicitly."

Nancy sang merrily as she pared, washed and dried the potatoes. Then she proceeded to grate them coarsely, but unfortunately rubbed her thumb over the grater, thereby interrupting her song for a minute.

In a very short time she had four dainty-looking pies in the oven, and the savory odor they emitted when she presently opened the oven door was a wonderful imitation of the original to say the least.

While her pies were baking, she prepared her mold of variegated apple jelly by peeling and cutting up a pound of sour apples and putting them to cook in a steppan with three ounces of sugar, a cupful of water and the juice and grated rind of a lemon.

Everybody has a favorite recipe for white cake, but perhaps Nancy's simple formula for layer cake may fill the need of some one whose papa like hers is "not rich."

Everything turned out splendidly, and Nancy felt a thrill of pardonable pride as she surveyed her finished pies, cakes and apple jelly.

"Now for my lemon jelly," she said, after a short rest in the easy chair by the window, and a few breaths of the pure fresh air that had a hint of frost in it.

ness, the tired yet happy girl hung up her gingham apron and rolled down her sleeves with a sigh of relief. The chicken was in the cool cellar all ready for the frying pan, the potato salad must be prepared later on, for it could not stand too long, while it would only take a few minutes to cream the potatoes while the chicken fried.

Nancy thought of all this while setting the table. The wide kitchen was also the dining-room, but it was built before people began cutting their houses up into so many rooms.

The girl gave a sigh of satisfaction as she surveyed her finished task, then covered all with a length of netting. An hour's rest, a lunch for which she brought a good appetite, and then she set out on her search for October treasures.

She was back long before the hour of her parents' return, and when they arrived she stood at the gate to receive them. Hal Dinale was with them, as she had expected, and he thought he had never seen so fair a picture as she presented in her soft brown dress, a spray of belated goldenrod at her throat and another in her hair.

There was a happy look in her dark eyes, and a deep flush stained her cheek as he held her hand in greeting. But somehow he did not like the "Cousin Hal," so freely bestowed. A nearer and dearer title would have been far more to his liking.

They were a little late, so made haste to prepare for the meal which Nancy said was waiting for them. How everybody did enjoy that tea. It was not considered ill-mannered in that section, if anything was particularly good, to say so, and Nancy found herself loaded with compliments.

"Now, here's a pie a man can eat without a haunting fear of indigestion or nightmare," said Mr. Moore, as he deposited a generous triangle of the mock mince upon his plate. "You have excelled yourself, dear, they are splendid." Thus it was with everything until the cakes were passed.

Nancy sat with downcast eyes, blushing under Hal's admiring glances, when a sudden and complete silence on the part of all caused her to look up. Mr. Moore was evidently on the verge of a fit, or making a heroic attempt to suppress a laugh. She glanced at Hal. He, too, was smiling, despite all efforts to the contrary.

She obeyed, but the expression of disgusted amazement on her face which followed was too much for Hal, and he joined the chorus. Nancy sat a moment the picture of mortification. Her beautiful cake, which rivaled the snow whiteness, and her cream layer of which she had been so proud, were both made of salt!

But really, it was too comical, and a moment later she was laughing as heartily as any of them. Well, the supper was a great success, notwithstanding her awful blunder; and ere she laid her head upon her pillow that night, Cousin Hal, who really was no cousin after all, had asked her to sweeten his cakes for all his life.

ENGLISH DRINKING SONGS.

Fletcher's Happy Efforts and the Variations of It. The best of the English drinking songs were written by the dramatists of the seventeenth century, men who trolled out their vigorous sentiments, linked sweetly together in flowing verse, without the smallest thought or fear of shocking anybody.

"Drink to-day and drown all sorrow. You shall perhaps not do it to-morrow; Best, while you have it, use your breath; There is no drinking after death."

"Then let us swell, boys, for our health. Who drinks well lives the commonwealth. And he that will to bed so sober Falls with the leaf, still in October."

Upon this song successive changes have been rung, until now its variations are bewildering, and to it we owe the ever-popular and utterly indefensible glee roared out for generations by many a lusty tavern chorus:

"He who goes to bed, and goes to bed sober, Falls as the leaves do, and dies in October; But he who goes to bed, and goes to bed mellow, Lives as he ought to do, and dies an honest fellow." —Atlantic.

Just Like Monkeys. The Behou, who occupy a densely wooded country among the hills of Benaraha, jump from tree to tree just like monkeys, and are not easily fooled, inasmuch as their territory is exceedingly rocky. They are very timid, and it is said they die of fright when captured. —N. Y. Sun.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

Not in the Mood.—First Chorus:—"Are you going to Mrs. De Stange musicale tonight?" Second Chorus:—"No, I'm not in a mood for talking!" —N. Y. Weekly.

Big Success.—"What do you think of my tragedy?" asked the self-styled playwright. "It's great. Never laughed harder at anything in my life." —Detroit Free Press.

Folks dat is allus lookin' for trouble," said Uncle Eben, "hab jes' cuttin' ter brag about. Dey don't hardly eber git disappointed." —Washington Star.

"Say, Weary, wot are you walkin' round in yere bare foots fer?" "I'm tryin' dis yer Knapp cure." "Wot fer, Weary?" "Cause some disblasted snoozer stole me shoes!" —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Her Level Head.—"Madame, can I sell you this valuable book, 'What to Do Before the Physician Comes?'" "No, sir; you don't catch me doing the work and then letting the doctor draw the pay." —Chicago Record.

"Miss B Jones uses French phrases in the most peculiar manner." "Well—'Does she?'" "Yes, indeed! Why, at breakfast yesterday I asked her how she liked her eggs and she said they were very 'cick.'" —Philadelphia Record.

"I don't see how you ever had the nerve to have your tooth pulled before the whole class of dental students. Did you scream?" "My dear 'I don't know whether I did or not. As soon as the professor tackled the tooth three horrid students set up their college yell and scared me so that I don't even know whether it hurt." —Indianapolis Journal.

WEATHER AND BRAINS.

Psychological Effect of the Former on the Latter.

The psychological effect of the weather has long been a most interesting study. Most people feel the influence of dull days, east winds and extreme cold on their spirits and energies, mental and physical. An arctic cold and tropical heat are unfavorable to literary composition, for example, and we speak of "freezing our wits," an expression which is not altogether figurative, but rests on a common experience.

Suicide occurs most frequently in summer, perhaps owing to the heat and exhaustion, and not, as might be supposed, in winter. The American Journal of Psychology has an article on the subject in which the head of a large factory is reported to state that a disagreeable day causes a reduction of ten per cent. in the output of the works.

Fine days make people generous and accessible and opinions given on such days are held by some to be the most logical. The influence of the weather upon the logical faculty, the nerve and the eye, has also been recognized in a perfunctory way. Nervous, excitable and irascible persons are prone to feel the influence of bad weather and blame their circumstances. Certain functional troubles of the liver, a chronic catarrh, a rheumatic joint, even a bad ear, predispose people to suffer from weather changes. —Providence Journal.

A Turfed Railroad Bed.

Grass will grow on a railway bed if the ties are covered with soil and seed sown. This can be verified by a visit to the Fairmount park trolley line near the Belmont avenue entrance. This section of the track resembles two parallel rails laid through a green meadow, and the impression is that the railway management intended to make the entire track from end to end like it. If the grass can be kept green in dry as well as wet seasons the presence of the track will hardly mar the landscape at all. Even the poles and trolley wires are not as ugly as the electric poles and wires which have been allowed to disgrace the park in every direction. There is a possibility, of course, that the grass between the tracks may prove a hindrance to the operation of the line even if it is ornamental, but this is hardly probable if the grass is kept well mowed. A railway line with no ties in sight and carpeted with a luxuriant green grass would be a novelty at least. —Philadelphia Times.

Freezing Air.

Most students of chemistry have seen water frozen in the average temperature of a room, but few have ever seen the air solidified so that it could be handled like ice or any other tangible article. But this has been done by Prof. James Dewar, of London. The operation is carried on through several stages and with various agents. Gases are reduced to liquids under great mechanical pressure, then suddenly liberated. Certain gases under pressure give a temperature 145 degrees below zero, and the evaporation of these is one part of the process. Pressure of almost 2,000 pounds to the square inch has been employed for the gases. The experiments are enormously expensive with present appliances and are of use only as demonstrations of possibilities. With further research may come more simple and less costly methods and materials. The future of freezing has great promise and its value cannot be estimated. —N. Y. Ledger.

Thirsty Lands.

The enormous basin drained by the Missouri river absorbs no less than 88 per cent. of all the rain that falls upon it whereas the basin of the Ohio river absorbs only 70 per cent. The amount of rainfall in the course of a year is proportionately greater in Ohio than in the Missouri basin, and so the former river, although much shorter of the two, contributes more water to the Mississippi than does its gigantic rival flowing from the west. —American Journal of Science.

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