

A NECESSARY CHAT

BY CAROLINE B. KING.

"It's strange, isn't it, how things turn out sometimes?" remarked my young neighbor as she sank into a comfortable chair in my living-room the other evening, ran her fingers through her short locks and settled down for a chat.

"Take Aunt Hannah, for instance. I used to think her just a tiresome old relative, but I've discovered that she is really one of the world's great philosophers, though she isn't aware of the fact."

"Tell me all about it," I begged, for I like my young neighbor's naive way of telling a story.

"Well, I had planned a sort of odd-job time for myself to-day, and had just gotten fairly started on some of the hundred and one things I wanted to do, when along came Aunt Hannah. I knew the moment I saw her turning in at the gate that she'd come to spend the day, for she had that funny shabby old black basket on her arm that always means a real visit."

"It's my birthday, child," she said as I kissed her, rather lukewarmly, I fear, and I couldn't think of a thing I'd rather do than come and spend it with you. Of course I thought at once of my ruined day, and all the time I was wondering what on earth there was in the house to eat, for, you see, now that the children have a hot lunch at school we have evening dinner, and my noon meal is apt to be rather sketchy."

"But Aunt Hannah didn't seem to notice my manner, I imagine. She took a fresh cap from the basket and put it on and then turned to me and said, 'I always think no matter what happens there's bound to be a laugh in it somehow.' Just then I chanced to spy my face in the glass and, do you know, I looked as though I had never laughed in all my life. But Auntie was going right on."

"It's kind of a game to find the laugh sometimes, and now and then it seems as though you just couldn't. I knew a woman once who was set on having her house all furnished with old antiques. She had it, too, all but her husband's bed; that was a little iron thing, but he liked it. He just loved his little iron cot and his army blanket, but on Christmas she gave him a great maple four-poster, and now he has to sleep on it whether or no because the little iron cot has been put down the cellar. He says he has had dreams every night since she gave him the bed. It was hard for him to find a laugh in the four-poster, but he managed it when he heard her say she'd first thought of giving him a Colonial sewing table."

"Sometimes," she went on, after we had laughed a little ourselves, "sometimes I think we women folks are real selfish with our homes; we think of them as just ours. We're even selfish with our housekeeping, and we spend so much time doing it up right that we just lose sight altogether of the idea of home that's back of it all. Someway I don't think we are fair to our home folks if we spend so much time and energy polishing and shining that we're all out of smiles and pleasant words when we're through. Do you?"

"And it isn't worth while either," she went on before I could answer. "Take me for example, when I was young I used to scour my kitchen floor with soap and sand nearly every day, and what's more, I used to pick out the dirt from the cracks with a hair-pin. Took a good while to do all that, but I was just set on it. Then along comes my son's wife to keep house in the old homestead, and what does she do but put linoleum over the whole floor. I must say I admire it, blue and gray and shiny, and so clean it never has to be scrubbed at all. And Marcia has to be gay and happy with her folks."

"I think if I was housekeeping again I'd look every job in the face before I began it, and ask myself if it was a job that really needed to be done, if it was actually worth doing. Then if it was I'd find the quickest and easiest way to keep the kitchen floor clean."

"I felt a little guilty at that, but Aunt Hannah went right on: "Well, I see they've set the last week in October for management week and all the Rotarians and Kiwanians and engineers and business men and optimists are invited to go to the city and talk about better ways to manage everything. Someone was saying it might be a good plan for housekeepers to meet with them and learn more businesslike ways to manage their homes. But I'm not quite in favor of so much efficiency. I believe that we should do just enough housekeeping to keep every member of our families happy and comfortable and neat and properly fed, then if there's any time left over we might spend it getting acquainted with each other, and finding places to laugh a bit."

"As for optimism, why, as I heard a woman remark at a meeting last spring, any mother who can get through a rainy washday with unexpected company for dinner, no pie in the house, her stove wood all wet and the baby colicky, and then go to bed wishing herself many happy returns of the day is an optimist already. And we've all done that more than once!"

"But how did you manage about lunch, or?" I asked after we had laughed at Aunt Hannah's description of an optimist."

"Well," said my young neighbor, "that was funny. I just didn't have

any. We had a picnic instead, made toast sandwiches with bits of hot fried bacon between them, gathered a few late tomatoes off the vines, and opened a jar of my spiced pears. I brought out some cold milk and we spread our picnic under the pear tree. Aunt Hannah thought it was great fun. Then I coaxed her to take a nap and while she slept I made her a birthday cake with one candle I happened to have. I put that on just for luck, and you should have seen the poor old dear's smiles. When the children came home I let them serve afternoon tea in the living room, and that was a real event for all of us."

"Before Aunt Hannah left we packed the remains of the birthday cake with a jar of the spiced pears in her basket along with the cap, and then the children gathered her a bouquet of late flowers."

"It's been the best birthday I've had in years," she said as we put her on the trolley car, but she didn't know that her birthday had been a better day for me than for her."

"And so to-morrow you will have your odd-job day, I suppose," I asked after we had both sat silent for a moment thinking of Aunt Hannah."

"Oh, no, indeed, I won't," replied my neighbor brightly. "No, for you see all the time Aunt Hannah was talking, she was working away, helping me with some of the things I had planned to do, so most of them are finished, and the rest I have looked fairly in the face and decided that they were not jobs that needed doing after all."

"A few more comfortable old philosophers carrying fresh caps in shabby baskets and homely wisdom in dear experienced old heads would help a whole lot in this puzzling world of ours," I thought to myself as I locked the door and turned out the lamp.

"Surely Aunt Hannah's ways are ways of understanding, and all her paths are peace!"

Controlling Abortion.

Not all abortion is contagious, but to be on the safe side one had better proceed as if it were. The most dangerous time for spreading contagious abortion is when the cow calves. As many calves come in the fall, care is needed now.

There is no known cure for abortion. All serum vaccines and drugs fail sooner or later. Notwithstanding this, and the additional fact that it is one of the most disastrous diseases known to the dairyman, the loss can be reduced to a minimum if proper control methods are used.

Some dairymen sell their aborters to the butcher. If the cow is a good producer this is the most expensive method. Fortunately only a few, maybe 5 per cent, abort more than once. Of these, unfortunately, quite a few are sterile thereafter. This, with the loss of the calf and the lessened milk flow causes a big loss.

Abortion usually appears suddenly and without warning. For this reason every cow that calves should be put in a box stall out of contact with the rest of the herd for at least ten days before she calves. The afterbirth and all the soiled bedding should be carefully carried out and burned. She should remain entirely away from the herd and should not be bred until all discharges have ceased, whether this is a few weeks or several months. It is the discharge that is dangerous. If the afterbirth does not come within a few hours, or if the discharge continues as long as ten days, a veterinarian should be called.

In buying new cows, see if there is a good crop of calves and young stock on the farm from where your new cows came. If not, beware! Give all your herd the abortion test once a year and treat all reactors the same as aborters. If these methods are followed, contagious abortion will now have no terrors for you.

Why Hens Have Combs.

Each part of an animal's body seems to be for a purpose, so why not ask the use of a hen's comb? Lately there have been experiments made to determine the answer. It has been thought that the hen's comb is a device to expose the blood to the ultra-violet rays and other sun rays, in order that enough calcium may be taken up to make egg-shells. Leg-weakness of chicks is lime-starvation, due to lack of power to pick up lime in the tissues when housed beneath ordinary window-glass. On account of the feathers, there is no other place but the legs, bill and wattles which can pick up the rays, and the feather-egged, small-combed birds are shy on eggs. This theory is as plausible as any.

Some of the pea-comb fowls are good layers, although it is true that the heavy-laying breeds all have good-sized combs. It is also true that the comb is at its largest size during heavy laying, and goes down with the egg yield. There are cases where Leghorns have been decimated—that is, the combs have been cut off while the birds were young. The object of this was to make the birds "front-proof." These birds seemed to lay as well as the birds with full combs. The operation of removing the combs is known as "dubbing." Some felle object to it, saying it is cruel, but it is probably no more painful than a frost-bite comb, and a "dubbed" comb is not a bit more unsightly.

S.S. LEMMA

November 22. Gideon and the Hosts of the Lord. Judges 7: 1-25. Gideon Test—He strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.—Ephraim 6: 12.

ANALYSIS.

I. CHOOSING THE THREE HUNDRED, 1-8. II. SPYING ON THE MIDDIANITE CAMP, 9-14.

III. GIDEON'S STRATEGY, 15-25.

INTRODUCTION.—The period of the Judges, following that of the rule of Joshua, and preceding the establishment of the monarchy under Saul and David, is not easy to describe, and the length of the period is uncertain. It was, probably, not less than one hundred and fifty years. Joshua himself may very properly be regarded as one of the judges, differing from those who followed him only in the fact that he exercised authority over all the tribes of Israel, while they ruled only over individual tribes or groups of tribes. The people were governed locally by the heads of families or of family groups, and by the chosen princes of the tribes. Each tribe was independent and the tribesmen guarded jealously their independence. They were united only by a common religious faith and the tradition of a common ancestry. Moses had given them a law and the beginning of a constitution as a nation, but disunited through Palestine, there was danger of that law being forgotten or disregarded. The influence, too, of the Canaanite customs and religious worship was strong, and affected seriously the minds of many of the people, loosening their attachment to their own ancient faith.

When common danger threatened or when oppressed by a foreign enemy, the people united under a vigorous and capable leader, who, after the victory was won, held during his life a place of recognized authority over those whose armies he had led, but no such leader, or judge, after Joshua, held sway over more than a limited part of the country.

I. CHOOSING THE THREE HUNDRED, 1-8.

"Jerubbaal, who is Gideon," was a native of the small community of Ophrah, of the clan of Abimelech, in the tribe of Manasseh. The central and northern tribes, west of Jordan, were oppressed by hordes of Midianite Arabs, who had come in through Gilead with tents and cattle and helped themselves to the harvests and pasture lands of Israel. Gideon's brothers had been slain by them, and he himself was threatening a scanty harvest of wheat, not at the usual threshing-floor, but by the winepress, to hide it, when an angel of the Lord appeared to him and called him to be the savior of Israel from the Midianites. When convinced that he was really called of God to this great task he first gathered a band of his own servants, broke down the altar of Baal, set up an altar to Jehovah, and offered sacrifice upon it. It was because of the shrewd answer of his father to the men of the town, when they would have put him to death for this act of defiance to Baal, that he received the name Jerubbaal. "Let Baal plead for himself" (ch. 6: 31). The next act of Gideon was to assemble the northern tribes against Midian, and a great host of more than thirty thousand men gathered to him on the southern side of the valley of Jezreel, where the Midianites were encamped.

"The people that are with these are too many." Trusting to that inward divine voice which constantly guided him, and which harmonized with his own better judgment, he decided to reduce the number of his army, and to try to obtain by strategy the victory which he could not hope to win over the vast host of the enemy with his undisciplined and poorly equipped force.

"Yet, too many." Even the ten thousand men of courage who are left are too many for his immediate purpose. By a simple test he chooses the men who drink from the cup-shaped hollow of one hand, with which they lift the water to the mouth, without resting their soldier-like vigilance or laying aside their weapons, and rejects those who sprawl upon all fours and put their mouths down to the water. "By the three hundred men that lapped" he had now faith to believe the Lord would give him victory. The rest of the army he held in reserve.

II. SPYING ON THE MIDDIANITE CAMP, 9-14.

Gideon went down by night with his servant and spied upon the poorly guarded camp. He heard the recital of a dream by one and the interpretation put upon it by another which greatly encouraged him. By this he learned also that there were already fears abroad among the Midianites, connected with his name, which paved the way for the success of the trick which he proposed to play upon them.

III. GIDEON'S STRATEGY, 15-25.

"Three companies." Gideon's plan was to distribute his men in three companies, silently, in the darkness, round about the Midianite camp, each man bearing a pitcher with a lighted candle inside and a trumpet. At the appointed signal each man was to break his pitcher and blow his trumpet. The Midianites, hearing the crash of the breaking earthenware, and seeing the sudden blazing forth of lights on every side, accompanied by the terrifying blast of three hundred trumpets, were seized with panic. "The Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host." The ten thousand men whom Gideon had led in their train now joined in the pursuit, driving the Midianite horde eastward to the foot of the Jordan which were held by the men of Ephraim. There two Midianite princes were taken and slain, Oreb, "the Raven," and Zeeb, "the Wolf."

"Land of Promise" in London. A street in London which bears the name "Land of Promise" has a beautiful one end and a poor house at the other.



DRESS OF UNUSUAL DESIGN.

The smartness of this attractive dress will be at once recognized by the observant miss, and in it she will see its possibilities for afternoon wear if fashioned of moire, or of woollen material for business. The bodice is joined to a two-piece flared skirt and the long tight-fitting sleeves are finished with trim cuffs. The long revers and set-under vestee with convertible collar are becoming and of the latest mode. No. 1437 is in sizes 16, 18 and 20 years. Size 18 (36 bust) requires 3 1/2 yards 39-inch, or 2 1/2 yards 54-inch material. 26 cents.

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I Feed My Sows Oats.

I get better than market prices for my oats by feeding them to brood sows before and after farrowing. Ordinarily it is necessary to buy bran or some other commercial feed to help make good pigs and to provide enough milk after they are born. Oats, I find, will do the job, thus saving my spending money for high-priced milk feeds. Oats are not quite so expensive as corn and they do not fatten the sow. Of course I feed an ear or two along with the oats. A little tankage helps, too.—E. J.

First Lesson in Finance.

Big Boy—"What are you crying about?" Little—"I traded my dog for some peanuts."

Big Boy—"Can't you trade back?" Little—"I ate the peanuts."

Of Course. "What caused the delay at your friend the plumber's wedding?" "He had to go back and fetch his best man."

Good in Addition. "Father, I made 100 in two subjects."

"That's mighty fine, son. What were they?" "Stay in geography and 40 in arithmetic."

Tippling Forbidden in Spain.

Tippling in Spanish hotels is now forbidden, the tipping charge being added to the regular hotel bill.



High Cost of Living. Gilda—"Yes, those collars and cuffs are very stylish, but my laundry bill is something awful."

REFRESHMENTS THAT ARE DIFFERENT

BY JANE HENNINGWAY.

People are just as likely to get into a rut with their party refreshments as with their everyday meals. And when, as is so often the case, you serve that "same-old thing" over and over, your refreshments lose their zest, no matter how nice they may be. But it is different when something new is offered.

"Wasn't that the best stuff?" one girl remarked to another as they rode home from Sue Elkin's bridge party. "What was it?"

I happened to have been the one Sue asked to help her pass the things that afternoon and I know just what it was. She used her tall parfait glasses, and in the bottom of each was a spoonful of orange ice. Then on top was finely cut fruit salad, the assortment of fruit that comes in cans. With this she served very salty wafers, cream cheese and coffee. The combination was delicious.

Hot nut gingerbread with whipped cream would be very popular served instead of ice cream and cake at an afternoon or an evening party. Mix a bowl of your favorite gingerbread and put it in a cool place until you are ready to serve refreshments. Then spread it in a large shallow baking pan, sprinkle a cup of coarsely chopped nut meats over it and bake. Cut in squares, heap with whipped cream with a dash of ground cinnamon on it and serve with coffee.

Mary Lukins, who really loves to invent new dishes, served an ice-cream sandwich to her club one afternoon last winter which "brought down the house." She called it an Oriental Melange and served it on her red Japanese plates. The cake part was

light fluffy white cake of that golden yellow variety, and between two thin slices of this white cake of vanilla ice cream. On top was a spoonful of whipped cream, a whole preserved fig and a spoonful of the syrup in which the figs were preserved. Iced tea, seasoned with raspberry jam while hot and flavored with whole cloves, made just the right accompaniment.

A nut bread sandwich made of cream cheese and pineapple, served like a club sandwich, is another excellent party dish. Serve with hot tea.

A fruit salad is a very popular salad for a party. To make one that is different, use a ripe or canned pear for each guest. Peel, core and marinate in French dressing. Then lay them in a shallow plate in a little raspberry or strawberry syrup until one side is colored red. This can be done with vegetable coloring if the syrup is not available. Roll in coconut. Stand each pear on a lettuce leaf, put a large clove in for a stem and insert two ivy or rose-garum leaves in the top.

A delicious sandwich to serve with it is filled with equal parts of tart currant jelly and peanut butter.

Men like something hearty for their party refreshments. For example, potato and ham salad.

A dish that can be made beforehand is individual chicken pies. Make a creamed chicken and fill little ramekins with it. Just before the guests arrive mix up a pan of baking-powder biscuits, cutting them just big enough to cover the top of the ramekins. Leave them on the board in a cool place. About ten minutes before you are ready for them, put one on top of each ramekin and bake in a hot oven.

Look on the closet door. Also on the upper half of the door is a handy little device that she has made herself. It is a hinged strip of wood sixteen inches long with a row of small brass screw eyes along the bottom. The hooks of coat hangers go through the eyes, each holding a blouse, sweater or other short garment.



Is That All?

"Give me just one kiss and that's all I'll ask."

"Well then nothing doing."

Men Think Better Under Strain.

Your easy-going, pleasant fellow isn't going to get there as fast as the man who grits his teeth, knits his brows and holds his muscles tense. A series of psychological tests recently was tried on persons while they were gripping a dynamometer, a pair of hand grips with meter attached, and then repeated while the subjects were sitting in relaxed positions. The results showed that persons can think much better and faster when their muscles are under tension.

Influenza in Scotland.

A considerable epidemic of influenza in Scotland during the three months ending June 30 had an influence on the death rate, as it indicated in the quarterly report of the births, deaths and marriages in Scotland. Deaths from influenza in all numbered 797.

WINTER FUN WITHOUT A GUN

Now is the time to study birds!

That sounds strange, for the birds are gone in some sections and going in others. But now is the time to study them. Here's a starter. When winter clamps down, secure a piece of suet and place this in the forks of a tree, or around the outside of the house, shed or barn, and wire or tie it firmly. Then watch it! Suet is a great institution to make bird friends.

You'll have lots of sport. Count the birds that will come for that suet—the different kinds. And if you are gentle, before spring you can have a picture of yourself and some bird, so close together that it will be a lifetime joy to you.

If you want more sport, build a window box with a self-sash eloping top and solid bottom which sticks out about eighteen inches, and solid sleeping sides. Leave front and back open. Screw the box to a window sill away from prevailing winds. Open a window, throw on the bottom of the box crumbs, scraps of meat and green vegetables. Close the window and stand back in the room and watch what happens. The glass top will expose every bird.

You'll make rousing good pals in a few weeks.

Better allow a landing place for the little flyers; this can be done by a

short piece of lath or other material sticking out from the floor a few inches.

If you have a camera you can trick the birds into taking their own photographs. This can be done by rigging up a string so that some little chap will light on it, or on a paddle attached trigger-like to the string. Then, bang! You have a photograph to be truly proud of.

By the time the snow is off the ground and the bluebirds are arriving and the robins are gradually working their way north, you will be bird hungry and you'll be wanting to build bird houses and bird baths, and will take a great joy in noting the habits of these little feathery tourists.

Then you'll see what I'm driving at. And that is to get you to keep your ears and eyes open, your mouth closed, and learn what the birds do and how they do it. If you will sit down at the foot of a tree, or in the brush, and be very still—and by that I mean still—the birds will wonder what you're "pulling off" and they'll start all manner of antics to make you move. And if you follow this several times in the same spot you'll see the same birds and they'll convince you that they know you. Birds are more curious than humans. Prove it! The time to study birds, does, is in the winter.—E. Roy.