

## TWO DOZEN BUTTONS.

Betty sighed. Now, why she should have sighed at this particular moment no one on earth could tell. And it was all the more exasperating because John had just generously put into her little shapely hand a brand-new ten-dollar bill. And here began the trouble.

"What's the matter?" he said, his face falling at the faint sound and his mouth clapping together in what those who knew him but little called an obstinate pucker. Now what is it?"

Betty, who had just begun to change the sigh into a merry little laugh rippling all over the corners of the red lips, stopped suddenly, tossed her head, and, with a small jerk no way conciliatory, sent out the words:

"You needn't insinuate, John, that I am always troublesome."

"I didn't insinuate—who's talking of insinuating?" cried he, thoroughly incensed at the very idea, and backing away a few steps, he glared down from a tremendous height, in extreme irritation. "It's yourself who is forever insinuating and all that, and then for you to put it on me—it's really abominable."

The voice was harsh, and the eyes that looked down into hers were not pleasant to behold.

"And if you think, John Peabody, that I'll stand and have such things said to me, you miss your guess—that's all!" cried Betty, with two big red spots coming in her cheeks, as she tried to draw her little erect figure to its utmost dimensions. "Forever insinuating! I guess you wouldn't have said that before I married you. Oh, how you can curse!"

"Didn't you say it first, I'd like to know?" cried John, in great excitement, drawing nearer the small creature he called "wife," who was gazing at him with blazing eyes of indignation. "I can't endure everything!"

"And if you bear more than I do," cried Betty, wholly beyond control now, "why, then, I'll give up," and she gave a bitter little laugh and tossed her head again.

And here they were in the midst of a quarrel! These two who, but a year before, had promised to love and protect and help each other through life.

"Now," said John, and he brought his hand down with such a bang on the table before him that Betty nearly slipped out of her shoes—only she controlled the start, for she would have died before she had let John see it, "we will have no more of this nonsense!"

His face was very pale and the lines around the mouth so drawn that it would have gone to any one's heart to have seen their expression.

"I don't know how you will change it or help it," said Betty lightly, to hide her dismay at the turn affairs had taken. "I'm sure!" and she pushed back the light, waving hair from her forehead with a saucy, indifferent gesture.

That hair that John always smoothed when he called her "child." Her gesture struck to his heart as he glanced at her sunny locks, and the cool, indifferent face underneath, and before he knew it he was saying:

"There is no help for it now, I suppose."

"Oh, yes there is," said Betty, still in that cool, calm way that ought not to have deceived him. But men know so little of women's hearts, although they may live with them for years in closest friendship. "You need not try to endure it, John Peabody, if you don't want to. I'm sure I don't care!"

"What do you mean?"

Her husband grasped her arms and compelled the merry brown eyes to look up to him. "I can go back to mother's," said Betty, provokingly. "She wants me any day, and then you can live quietly and to suit yourself, and it will be better all around."

Instead of bringing out a violent protestation of fond affection and remorse, which she fully expected, John drew himself up, looked at her fixedly for a long, long minute, then dropped her arm, and with white lips said slowly:

"Yes, it may be as you say, better all around. You know best!" and was gone from the room before she could recover from her astonishment enough to utter a sound.

With a wild cry Betty rushed across the room, first tossing the ten-dollar bill savagely as far as she could throw it, and flinging herself on the comfortable old sofa, broke into a flood of bitter tears—the first she had shed during her married life.

"How could he have done it! Oh, what have I said? Oh, John, John!"

The bird twittered in his little cage over in the window among the plants. Betty remembered like a flash how John and she had filled the seed-cup that very morning, how he had laughed when she tried to put it in between the bars, and when she couldn't reach without getting upon a chair he took her in his great arms and held her up, just like a child, that she might fix it to suit herself.

And the "bits" he had said in his tender way, they had gone down deep to the depths of her foolish little heart, sending her about her work singing for very gladness of spirit. And now!

Betty stuffed her fingers hard into her rose ears to shut out the bird's chirping. "If he only knew why I sighed," she moaned. "Oh, my husband! Birthdays—nothing will make any difference now. Oh, why can't I die?"

How long she stayed there, crouched down on the old sofa, she never knew. Over and over the dreadful scene she went, realizing its worst features each time in despair, until a voice out in the kitchen said: "Betty!" and heavy footfalls proclaimed that some one was on the point of breaking in upon her uninvited.

Betty sprang up, choked back her sobs, and tried with all her might to compose herself and remove all traces of her trouble.

The visitor was the worst possible one she could have had under the circumstances. Crowding herself on terms of the closest intimacy with the pretty bride, who with her husband, had moved into the village a twelve month previous, Miss Elvira Simmons had made the very most of her opportunities, and by dint of making great parade over helping her in some domestic work such as house cleaning, dress making and the like, the maiden lady had managed to ply her other vocation, that of news-gatherer at one and the same time, pretty effectually.

She always called her by her first name though Betty resented it; and she made a great handle of her friendship on every occasion, making John rage violently and vow a thousand times the "old maid" should walk.

But she never had—and now, seeming dimly, like a carion after its own prey, that trouble might come to the pretty little white house, the make-mischief had come to do her work; if devastation had not already commenced.

"Been crying?" she said, more plainly than politely, sinking down into the pretty chintz-covered rocking-chair with an energy that showed that she meant to stay, and made the chair creak fearfully.

"Only folks do say that you and your husband don't live happy—but la! I wouldn't mind—I know 'tain't your fault."

Betty's heart stood still. Had it come to this? John and she not live happy? To be sure they didn't, as she remembered with a pang the dreadful scene of words and hot tempers; but had it gotten around so soon—a story in everybody's mouth?

With all her distress of mind she was saved from opening her mouth. So Miss Simmons, falling in that, was forced to go on.

"An' I tell folks so," she said, rocking herself back and forth to witness the effect of her words, "when they git to talkin'; so you can't blame me if things don't go easy for you, I'm sure!"

"You tell folks?" repeated Betty, vaguely and standing quite still. "What? I don't understand."

"Why, that the blame is all his'n," cried the

old maid, exasperated at her strange mood and her dullness. "I say says I, why there couldn't no one live with him, let alone that pretty wife he's got. That's what I say, Betty. And then I tell 'em what a queer man he is, how cross, an—"

"And you dare to tell people such things of my husband?" cried Betty, drawing herself up to her extreme height, and towering so over the old woman in the chair that she jumped in confusion at the form she had raised, and stared blindly into the blazing eyes and face rosy with righteous indignation—her nely thought was how to get away from the storm she had raised but could not stop. But she was forced to stay, for Betty stood just in front of the chair and blocked up the way, so she slunk back into the smallest corner of it and took it as best she could.

"My husband?" cried Betty, dwelling with pride on the pronoun—least, if they were to part, she would say it over lovingly as much as she could till the last moment; and then, when the time did come, why, people should know that it was not John's fault—"the best, the kindest, the noblest husband that ever was given to a woman. I've made him more trouble than you can guess; my hot temper has vexed him—I've been cross, and impatient and—"

"Hold!" cried a voice, "you're talking against my wife!" and in a moment big John Peabody rushed through the door, grasped the little woman in his arms and folded her to his heart, right before old maid and all.

"Oh!" said Miss Simmons, sitting up straight and setting her spectacles more firmly.

"And now that you have learned all that you can," said John, turning around to her, still holding Betty, "why—you may go."

The chair was vacant. A dissolving view through the door was all that was to be seen of the gossip, who started up the road hurriedly, leaving peace behind.

"Betty," said John, some half hour afterward, "what was the sign for I don't care now, but I did think dear, and it cut me to the heart, how you might have married richer. I longed to put ten times ten into your hand, Betty, and it galled me because I couldn't."

Betty smiled and twisted away from his grasp. Running into the bedroom she presently returned, still smiling, with a bundle rolled up in a clean towel. This she put on her husband's knee, who stared at her wonderingly.

"I didn't mean," she said, unpinning the bundle, "to get it out now, but I shall have to. Why, John, day after to-morrow is your birthday."

"So 'tis," said John. "Gracious! has it come around so soon?"

"And you, dear boy," said Betty, shaking out before his eyes a pretty brown affair, all edged with silk of the bluest shade, that presently assumed the proportions of a dressing gown; "this is to be your present. But you must be dreadfully surprised, John, when you get it, for oh, I didn't want you to know it!"

John made an answer he thought best. When he spoke again he said, perked up, while a small pucker of bewilderment settled between his eyes:

"But I don't see, Betty, what this thing," laying one finger on the gown had to do with the sign."

"That," said Betty, and then she broke into a merry laugh, that got so mixed up with the dimples and the dancing brown eyes that for a moment she couldn't finish. "Oh, John, I was worrying so over those buttons. They weren't good, but they were the best I could do then. And I'd only bought 'em yesterday. Two whole dozen. And when you put that \$10 bill in my hand, I didn't hardly know it, but I suppose I did give one little bit of a sigh, for I was so provoked that I had not waited buying them until to-day."

John caught up the little woman, dressing-gown and all. I don't think they have ever quarrelled since—at least I have never heard of it.

## Victoria a Miser.

London Letter.—The fact is, the Queen is a miser, pure and simple. Her love of money is only equalled by her love of power—at least, if the petty prerogatives and rights to the homage of court lackeys can be called power—and she will never let her grasp loose on her purses—drawn as long as the national treasury can be drained upon instead. Her income from the nation is three hundred and eighty-five thousand pounds, or close upon two millions of dollars, per annum. Out of this she is said to have saved, and put by under lock and key while she has sat upon England's throne, the sum of four millions of pounds. Seeing that she has reigned for nearly forty-five years, it seems not such a difficult job to have saved so much from her income.

Indeed, it seems difficult to think in what way she gets rid of half of her income every year. She keeps no state; she patronizes no art as a Queen should patronize it. As for her charities, what are they? One now and then sees that her majesty has "graciously been pleased to send a hundred pounds" in aid of some case of distress or want; and whenever a woman is so fortunate as to bring three children into the world at a birth, she thereupon becomes entitled to what is called "The Queen's Bounty"—viz., the sum of three pounds. Just imagine—three pounds from the Queen. But even these beneficent donations do not come out of the Queen's pocket. In other words, she has to deny herself anything in order to give, as other people do, to charity. The sum of nearly fourteen thousand pounds a year is especially allotted her under the head of "Royal Bounty." I don't suppose the rankest Tory in England could be got to say he believes she ever expends one-third of this sum every year in any sort of charity.

Then look at the presents she gives at weddings—about the only way she ever makes a gift to any out of her own family. What are they? India shawls. Very nice and very worthy, and very grand, no doubt. But do they cost her anything? No. If they did, I fear many a titled bride would be shawless on her marriage morn. She gets so many every year—twelve, I believe—as tribute as empress of India, and unable to sell them (which she would if she decently could), she gets rid of them as bridal presents, and saves herself the expense of having to buy anything else instead. Shrewd, decidedly, but not exactly the sort of thing one looks for in a queen. But the subject of the queen's penuriousness and meanness is one which has undergone considerable discussion of late, and engorged almost every of the talk. Still, taken in connection with the projected marriage of her favorite daughter, and the fact that the country will be called upon to furnish the support of the newly married pair, it becomes a sort of safety-valve through which to vent one's feelings.

## Race With a Locomotive.

From the Virginia (Nov.) Enterprise.

Several of Hook Mason's men were at Wabaska the other day to say good-by to one of their number who was going North. Just as the train was fairly under way the departing vaquero shouted back that he had left his overcoat. A short search resulted in finding the article, and a hurried discussion arose as to the best way of restoring it to its owner, when it was suggested that had they been quick enough one of them might have caught the train on his horse. The suggestion was like a flash of fire to powder. One glance after the fast disappearing train and Dan Farley was in the saddle, plunging both rowels in his steed, and away, and away, over ditches, through the sagebrush, up the hills and down the hollows, riding as though for dear life, like a madman, or, more reckless still, like a thorough blooded cowboy. It was a hard run, but in about a mile and a half Dan overhauled the train and the conductor slackened speed so that he could deliver the coat. It is needless to say that Dan rode a good horse and that it was an exciting spectacle to those who saw it. A horse race would be a tame affair in comparison.

## FARM, FIELD AND FIRESIDE.

### Farming Paragraphs.

Mr. G. L. Hulbert, Berlin, Mich., sold \$108 worth of sage last year and raised 250 bushels of popcorn.

"Hog" is defined by The Cedar Rapids Republican as "only an abbreviation for condensed corn."

It is estimated that 200,000 tons of beet sugar will be consumed in this country during the coming year.

They have found one place in Oregon where the snow is only seven feet deep, and the people are pointing to it and calling: "Come West, if you want eternal summer."—Detroit Free Press.

Mr. John Gould remarks that it is better to buy a good animal with a poor pedigree than a poor animal with a good pedigree.

In counting railroad freights, the charge is generally by the ton. Thirty-three and one-third bushels of wheat, or 35-2-3 bushels of corn, make a ton.

"Too much style" is said by the Lansing Republican to have cost a schoolmistress her position at Yankee Springs, Mich. "She was dismissed because she would not eat fat pork."

The discomfiture and helplessness of the Washburn & Moen barbed wire sharks shows what the people can do with a monopoly if they set about it.—Western Rural.

A Dakota correspondent says flax is a paying crop there; that farmers must give more attention to stock and less to wheat; and, "hard times have caused a stay in the advancing prices of lands."

Pray look to the cellars. Decaying apples, pumpkins, potatoes, cabbages, turnips and the like are thought to be the causes of malignant fevers, diphtheria and the like.

The Saginaw Courier is "confident that the era of wholesale land robbery has nearly ended." "Good reason why," comments the Philadelphia Record, "the wholesale land has nearly ended too."

The barbed wire monopoly is approaching its end through the lapsing of patents.

The United States produces forty-eight bushels of cereals for each person, as against the raising of eleven bushels to each person in Great Britain and Ireland.

In looking about for help the coming season, bear in mind that poor workmen are apt to ask as big wages as good ones, although they may be not worth half as much. Discriminate between the two classes, and pay according to actual worth.

It is generally best to cut all the wood wanted for each year's fuel from one division of the woodlot, cutting everything close, and protecting the sprouts from cattle. All will then grow up together, thickly, trim and straight. The less valuable can be checked by sprouting off in August. In about fifteen years there will be a strong growth again, fit for many uses.

There is nothing that farming so much needs as more brains and brainwork in studying the necessities and capabilities of the farm, and in systematically planning its work, and then tenacity in intelligently working out these plans. Thought, system and persistency are the foundation pillars of successful farming!

We quote the following remedy for chapped hands from The Boston Journal of Chemistry for J. H.: Eight ounces glycerine, two ounces water, one of starch, one of arnica tincture. Heat the glycerine water and starch until it becomes a transparent mass. When nearly cool add the tincture of arnica, and perfume with oil of rose. If desired, it can be colored with tincture of alkanet.

At a meeting in Canada a speaker asked what crop the farmers of the country considered to be the hardest on the land, whereupon the Toronto Globe says, "there were cries of Oats from all parts of the house." Mr. Mills asked if it was not a fact that farmers generally sowed oats at the end of a rotation on land that would not produce other cereal crops; and if it were not true that oats would thrive where most other crops would not. He said it was perhaps true that oats were harder on land than wheat, but not so much so as was generally supposed."

### Cookery.

ORANGE PIE.—Grated rind and juice of two oranges, four eggs—save whites for frosting—one cup of sugar, one tablespoon of milk, one teaspoon of corn-starch, butter the size of an egg.

ROAST SPARE-RIB.—Take a nice spare-rib with part of the tenderloin left in; season with salt and a little pepper, sprinkle with sage or summer savory; put it in a pan with a little water; baste often and roast until nicely browned and thoroughly well done.

ROAST LEG OF PORK.—Cut a slit near the knuckle and fill the space with sage and onion, chopped fine, and seasoned with pepper and salt, with or without bread crumbs. Rub sweet oil on the skin to prevent blistering and make

the crackling crisp; the rind may be scored about once in half an inch. If the leg weighs seven pounds it will require three hours roasting. Serve with apple sauce.

PREPARING TRIPE.—First have the tripe washed very clean; have ready a kettle of boiling water, cut the tripe up in small pieces, dip for one or two minutes into the boiling water one piece at a time, take out and scrape with a knife. Put a board into the sink so it will be inclined, on which to scrape the tripe. It is very quickly done in this way.

For a good, hot, bread cake, take two tablespoonfuls of Indian meal, two of molasses, one not at all heaping, one of soda, one and a half teacups of buttermilk, a good pinch of salt; thicken this until it is about like a thick paste with rye flour; bake in moderate oven for thirty-five minutes. Another way, both recommended by an excellent authority, is to start with a pint of wheat-bread sponge. Mix with this two quarts of Indian meal and water enough to wet it; then stir in half a pint of wheat flour and a tablespoonful of salt; let this rise, then knead it well and put it in tins; when light bake it for an hour and a half.

### The Application of Method.

Method is the oil that makes the wheels of the domestic machine run easily. The master and mistress of a house who desire order, must insist on the application of method to every branch and department of household work. To be well done, a thing must be done at the proper time and in the proper way. There must be a time and a place for everything, and everything must be in its proper time and place. Nothing is more fatal to home comfort than the habit of dawdling, of lingering over a little task in a desultory and indolent spirit, of going from one bit of work to another, and finishing neither. Example is better than precept; and if the rulers of the household display a vigorously active spirit, all who serve under them will be animated by it.

### House Plants.

Dryness of the air is the chief obstacle to successful window gardening. Plants succeed much better in the kitchen than in the parlors, as the air is charged with moisture from the cooking, etc. If the house is heated by a furnace, there should be a pan for evaporating water in the furnace, kept well supplied. If stoves are used, keep vessels of water on them. Dust is injurious to plants. Much may be prevented from settling on the leaves by covering the plants with a light fabric whenever the rooms are swept. All smooth-leaved plants, like the ivy, camellias, etc., should have a weekly washing with a damp sponge. The others may be placed in a sink or bathtub, and given a thorough showering. Water should be given as needed, whether daily or weekly. Do not water until the soil is somewhat dry. Keeping the earth constantly wet soon makes unhealthy plants. Let the water be of the same temperature as the room. Hanging plants dry out rapidly. Plunge the pots or baskets in a pail or tub of water, and after they have ceased to drip return them to their places. The so-called green fly or plant louse is easily killed by tobacco water. Apply this when of the color of weak tea. Red spider is very minute and works on the lower side of the leaves. When these turn brown the spiders may be suspected. Give frequent showers, laying the pot on the side, and apply water with the syringe. Scale insects and mealy bug are best treated by hand-picking before they become numerous. Chrysanthemums, when through flowering, should have the stems cut away and the pots of roots taken to the cellar. The pots of bulbs which were placed in the cellar or in a pit for roots to form may be brought to the window and as they grow give an abundance of water. If needed, support the heavy flower spikes of hyacinths by a small stake.

### The Marriage Life.

The marriage life, says Sir Richard Steele, is always an insipid, a vexatious or a happy condition. The first is when two people of no genius or taste for themselves meet, upon such a settlement as has been thought reasonable by parents and conveyancers, from an exact valuation of the land and cash of both parties. In this case the young lady's person is no more regarded than the house and improvements in purchase of an estate, but she goes with her fortune rather than her fortune with her. These make up the crowd or vulgar of the rich, and fill up the lumber of the human race, without beneficence toward those below them or respect to those above them.

The vexatious life arises from a conjunction of two people of quick taste and resentment, put together for reasons well known to their friends, in which especial care is taken to avoid (what they think the chief of evils) poverty, and insure to them riches, with every evil besides. These good people live in a constant restraint before company and too great familiarity alone. When they are within observation they fret at each other's carriage and behavior; when alone they revile each other's person and conduct.

The happy marriage is where two persons meet and voluntarily make

choice of each other without principally regarding or neglecting the circumstances of fortune or beauty. These may still live in spite of adversity or sickness; the former we may in some measure defend ourselves from; the other is the portion of our very make.

### How to Cook Beef so it Will Keep Until July.

My plan is to cut my beef into suitable pieces for the cook. Soak all bloody pieces over night in cold water. For 100 pounds of beef I make a brine of eight gallons of water, four quarts rock salt, pour pounds brown sugar, one large spoonful saltpeper. Boil, skim and cool; sprinkle a little salt in the bottom of the barrel; pack the beef edge-wise (but not too tight) sprinkle a little salt and sugar over each layer of beef and turn the cold brine on it. If you do not take from it often give the barrel a shake once a week, as that will keep the brine from becoming stagnant. If any scum should arise remove it before you remove the weight or disturb the beef. In the month of May remove the beef, scald and skim as before, and repack with rock salt and sugar. If you draw from it often enough to keep the brine well stirred up, you will have as mellow, sweet beef at the end of fifteen months as the first week.

### For Fair Reform.

Mr. J. W. Newcomb, Kenton, Ohio, uses very plain language in a column and a half of The Farmer, apropos of the annual fair of that State, a subject which is still discussed in the local papers. To say nothing of the saloon business; the licensed boarding-house appears to have been kept "for the privilege of fleecing the public;" at least one of the side-shows was little short of obscene, and on the whole the management was "all wrong." Instead of "promoting husbandry and kindred interests" the exhibition "seems to be the source of evil, and that continually, and few mitigating circumstances. It is the headquarters of roughs, gamblers, pickpockets, confidence men and all who live by their wits from the hard earnings of—well, let me say, fools. Why are they suffered to cumber the grounds, making a Babel of confusion? The fair was not instituted for any such purpose. For a consideration the board licenses them to ply their trade, which is plunder. If the quiet farmers cannot meet and interchange views without being crowded and hustled and their rights invaded, let them stay at home."

The closing sentence of the above suggests the remedy for such condition, if no other is within reach. Let self-respecting farmers, who value the future of their children, and all right-thinking people, refuse to countenance such exhibitions, either in Ohio or any other State, by keeping away from them.

### Tobacco Growing in Wisconsin.

From the Country Gentleman.

Few persons have any idea of the huge proportions of the tobacco interests in this portion of Wisconsin. A few years ago the tobacco crop was confined to a very circumscribed locality; now it is an overspreading, constantly increasing crop. A few years ago the revenue was comparatively insignificant, benefiting a few individuals only; now tobacco is the staple crop of this portion of Wisconsin. The 1884 crop was about 7,000 acres, for which we will, in round numbers, receive \$2,500,000. The tobacco warehouses in Janesville, and Edgerton, fourteen miles west, built in the past three years, will aggregate \$100,000. Besides the warehouses, there have been innumerable tobacco sheds erected on the various tobacco plantations in the neighborhood. The crop of 1884 is nearly all sold; quite a large amount has been already shipped. Most of the crop was cured in good condition, some of the slovens being the only ones who brought ill-conditioned tobacco to market.

### Curing Hams and Bacon.

Mr. William Crozier's method of curing hams and bacon is as follows: When the meat has been properly cut up it is well rubbed with salt and left on the benches to drain for 24 hours. This removes the moisture from it. Seven-and-one-half pounds of salt, two-and-one-half pounds of brown sugar, and four ounces of salt-peper, are then put in as much water as will dissolve them completely, and two ounces of Cayenne pepper are added. The liquid is boiled a few minutes, skimmed, and set aside to cool. Meanwhile the meat is rubbed with a dry mixture of the same, and is closely packed in the barrels or tubs, and the pickle is poured over it until it is covered. In six weeks it is cured and ready for smoking. It is smoked with hickory brush-wood or corncobs, or both, one hour a day for ten days. The fire is made outside of the smoke-house, and the smoke is carried in by a flue, so that it is cooled and does not warm the meat. After ten days the meat is rubbed with pepper and is ready for sale, or, if to be kept, should be packed in close boxes with wheat chaff or cut straw, and kept in a dry, cool place.

Judge Thomas M. Cooley, for twenty years on the Supreme bench of Michigan, and a well-known writer on legal topics, will retire from the bench at the close of the present year, when his term expires. There is a very general disposition among the legal fraternity and leading men of parties to secure Judge Cooley's renomination by both parties, but he now positively declines to serve longer.