

Anyone can estimate the value of this in our damp uncertain climate. A couple of sticks and a match start the cosiest of flames in a moment.

We will begin with our grandmother's axiom:

"A fire well mended,
Is a fire best tended."

An open one should be built up lightly with twigs, paper, cinders and coal. When properly alight, draw the living coal to the front and pack a mixture of small dust and cinders (slacked with water and well damped) behind.

This fire will burn for seven or eight hours and give more heat—spell M-O-R-E in capitals, please—than an equally large fire of cobbles and round coal. It is well to remember that gas jets and flame are not as hot as a glow. A bank of slack acts as a non-conductor. It reflects back any heat into the room instead of absorbing it as does the iron back of an ordinary grate. In the course of a short time this mass hardens into a cake which can be broken up into bits when wanted.

I think this plan is more satisfactory than the use of briquettes.

The latter are certainly invaluable for night-work, or for keeping in a fire from morning till eve. But then, it is dark and dull and cheerless if one is using the room. A frontage of live coal prevents this being the case in a scientifically slacked fire.

Half a ton of best slack should be ordered, and burnt, with each ton of coal. It is half the price, so see what a saving is effected.

How to mend a fire in a sick-room without disturbing the patient is often asked.

Some recommend coal neatly tied up in paper-bags outside the chamber. I have found a pair of coal scissors (price 1s.) or some old gloves more convenient. A cast-off gauntlet glove pulled over the hand, and we can manipulate the small lumps in our coal vase noiselessly and without soiling our fingers. With this plan, too, there is no rustle of paper and occasional clatter from a breaking bag.

A dust-bin or ash-pit, as I said at the commencement of this paper, has no immediate connection with the ingle-nook. Indeed, it should have no connection whatever with a house in which fires are properly

looked after. Every scrap of green stuff, cabbage stalks, potato peelings, withered flower stems, daily sweeping from the rooms, should be put on the kitchen range every day after dinner. Then add a layer of wet coal-dust. Put on the iron rings. Close the door over the bars. Pull out the damper, and by six o'clock (entirely sans odour) a clear fire will be ready for toast or anything else.

No additional coal will have been used.

Before leaving this subject of fuel, I cannot resist a word in praise of oil-stoves.

Of course everyone knows the cleanliness and desirability of gas as a heating agent. Few understand the economy of paraffin.

I have an ABC cooking stove. Whenever my particular Mary Jane is out I do everything on it. Stoking a kitchen fire is heavy work. My Rippling stove obviates the necessity for such. Bread, cakes, pastry all rise beautifully with the easily regulated all-round heat.

Then a small stove, to prepare hot water for morning ablutions or whatever we want, on one's marble-topped washstand. A tiny one to keep rasher and sausage and omelette frizzling for breakfast beside the parlour table. It is luxury. Just try it. The cost of such a wee stove is only four shillings at the co-operative stores.

Lamps are another difficulty in an ordinary house. Even where gas is laid on, this soft light is preferred by most people in drawing-room or study.

It takes, apparently, a cultivated brain, trained fingers and great intelligence to make our lamps burn properly. At least one might judge so. For in how few houses do we see proper combustion, and its accompaniment an odourless, smokeless, light?

Brown the butler does not always succeed. No more does Alice the parlourmaid. As for poor Mary Jane with her hurried moments and clumsy fingers—!

I used to be in despair. Chimneys would fly; wicks would char; flames would smoke.

Defries, Hincks, American, German, Triumph, Wonder—we tried every variety of patent. Best crystal, sunlight, daylight, colza—every known brand of oil was imported.

At last I determined to see after the lamps myself. It took me two hours the first morning to fit wicks of the proper width (a

most necessary preliminary) to a lot of clean boiled burners. Every loose, burnt, particle causes a loss of ventilation. Every bit of perforation should therefore be clear.

If this is looked to every day, a very few minutes will be expended and your light be satisfactory. Wicks need cutting with scissors only about once a week. A rub with paper keeps them right at other times.

Lamp chimneys may be toughened by putting them in a large saucepan full of cold water. Bring slowly to the boil. After simmering a few minutes, draw aside, and let them cool in the same pot. The expansion caused is so gradual that they will resist any ordinary lamp flame for a long time. These glasses, when smoked, may be cleaned with newspaper. Something in the printer's ink seems to give a polish and brighten as nothing else does. It does away, too, with the endless black rags servants seem to think necessary for lamp chimneys. I say "black" advisedly; who ever saw white rubbers in a lamp pantry? What lady, even, could keep her cloths clean if used for removing smut and smoke? The oily papers may be put aside in a basket, and kept for lighting fires. No medicated wheels or candle ends will then be required. Of course some soft towels to keep brass reservoirs and burners bright will be needed. I recommend old silk handkerchiefs for the purpose.

Locomotive lights are a great difficulty. Candles are the safest for carrying about, but oh! for the grease generously besprinkled by careless hands. Candlesticks with glass shades obviate this unpleasantness. A tiny "Tom Thumb" lantern for Mary Jane to use when preparing bedrooms after dark is the best. A long coil of circular cord-wick absorbs a thimbleful of oil and she only burns the vapour. A terrible danger may be averted by chaining and padlocking the kitchen lamp for the same maiden. It will not then be held over the range to see if fritters in a pot of boiling fat are done.

In my limited experience of twelve years in my own ingle-nook I have personally come across three deaths from burning in the kitchen. Each time a lamp, as above held, was the cause. These terrible cases were not in my own kitchen, I am thankful to say. But they taught me a lesson which I cannot forbear passing on to my fellow-sisters.

NOTICES OF NEW MUSIC.

FOR SOLO VOICE.

Songs of Shakespeare (Novello & Co.), edited by J. F. Bridge, Mus. Doc. The talented organist of Westminster Abbey has collected and arranged the original or earliest known settings of songs from Shakespeare's works. A most interesting addition to the Series of Vocal Albums.

Three Songs from Anna Magdalena Bach's music book composed by J. S. Bach. Bach's second wife, very happily for us, copied into books the music which gave her most pleasure, and amongst others these three beautiful songs by the great master of polyphonic writing.

At Every Age (R. Cocks & Co.), sung by Prince Gremin in the opera of Eugène Onégin; *Sweet Star that Shineth*, Triquet's song from the same opera. These favourite airs from the late composer Tchaikowsky's successful work are here published separately with English words by Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland Edwards.

Shepherd's Love Song, words by May Gillington, music by Beatrice Parkyns. This is a very charming pastoral song.

Six Volkslieder, music by Maude Valerie White. These songs contain all the charm so naturally associated nowadays with Miss White's name.

Angels, music by J. M. Capel, words by J. Strange Winter. Above the average serious ballad.

In Times of Old, music by Frances Allitsen. The music is an appropriate accompaniment to some cynical verses, contrasting the knightly ardour of olden times with the up-to-date commercial contract supposed to represent "love."

The Cross of Calvary (Phillips & Page), stated to be Gounod's last song, is very similar in character to the other sacred songs published by this firm with Gounod's name attached to them.

Angel Voices is a good song by Clement Locknane. It contains a charm of natural genius, which, we think, in no small measure compensates for the weakness in technical knowledge.

Six Songs (B. Williams), by J. W. Ivimey. There are signs of considerable ability in this album of songs by the late assistant music-master at Harrow School.

Hush, Throbbing Heart (Weekes & Co.), a well-written ballad by Lester Carew.

Forwards! but Steady, music by J. W. Sidebotham, M.P., Mus. B. A unionist song of the most inspiring type, introducing in an ingenious way appropriate symphonies to the verse preceding.

It is dedicated to Mr. Balfour, as earnest a musician as he is an eminent leader of men, and is composed by the only member of Parliament who holds a musical degree. An excellent song for political gatherings.

With the Swallows (Stanley Lucas & Co.), a villanelle with music by Eva Dell'Acqua. A graceful song, and not difficult.

Changeless Love. Sunshine (Paterson & Sons). Two songs above the ballad average, by George F. Horan.

Swallows Come Home, by Alfred Stella, is also an interesting song.

Come, My Love, to Me (Enoch & Sons), by Chaminade, is representative of this charming writer's power of expression.

Carina (Willcocks), by J. M. Capel. A fascinating Italian love-song.

The Snowdrift (Patey & Willis). Another charming song by George F. Horan. Sad in

character, but this is entirely in keeping with the sad words by A. Valdemar.

Sorrow and Joy (Duff & Stewart), by A. H. Behrend. Another specimen of the "Let's be miserable" school. We fancied that this tendency toward the enjoyment of disagreeables was subsiding.

FOR PIANOFORTE.

Nocturne (Paterson & Sons, Glasgow), by J. E. R. Senior. A beautifully worked-out development of the initial phrase in the slow movement of Mendelssohn's Scotch symphony. The principal difficulties lie in the left hand, for which this effective composition provides excellent practice. We recommend the Nocturne to the attention of teachers.

Doubt and Fairy Steps (R. Cocks & Co.). Two characteristic pieces gracefully written by the late J. Haydn Parry, whose short career so sadly ended but a short time ago. Both pieces are pleasant to play and simple in construction.

Studies in the Style of the Great Masters, by J. H. Bonawitz. The sort of mimicry disguised in the above title is a questionable flattery to the eminent men whose work is supposed to be represented.

Norwegian Dances and Norwegian Wedding (B. Williams), by Frederic Mullen.

Japanese Dances (dedicated to Mrs. Mullen), by Albert Fox.

We would suggest, as a new Christmas game, that people should be blindfolded while some one plays a selection from the so-called Japanese and Norwegian pieces above named. Then the blindfolded listeners must guess which is Norwegian and which Japanese. Why not call them Greig-orian tones?

Souvenances (Enoch & Co.), a song without words by Chaminade, we recommend as a graceful melody.

Trois Novelettes (Laudy & Co.), by F. Borowski, are useful little pieces. Of the three we admire the valse most.

Novello & Co. We have received piano-forte arrangements of *Helen of Kirkconnel*, an orchestral ballad by Arthur Somervell, and one in A minor by Stewart Macpherson; also an arrangement by Berthold Tours of the *Polonaise* in Glinka's *Vie pour le Czar*.

Memories, by Marguerite Marigold suggest the thoughts of a beginner, and No. 1 is founded on a recollection of Sullivan's "Prodigal Son." Oh, memory!

Summer Thoughts (Willcocks & Co.), by John Crook. Four very graceful compositions, and full of musicianly feeling.

Six Pianoforte Pieces (Stanley Lucas & Co.), by Cornelius Gurlitt. An excellent writer for the young; in the above pieces, however, we find passages which older children will have to attempt.

FOR HARMONIUM AND ORGAN.

Evening and Barcarolle (Paterson), by J. E. Senior. These two pieces for harmonium by the eminent Glasgow organist are in every way suited to the instrument, and are welcome additions to its repertoire.

Novello & Co. We are in receipt of many valuable contributions to organ composition published by this firm. In their "Original Organ Compositions" some of the recent numbers are very strong, such as Nos. 205 to 210 by J. Rheinberger, and 211 to 214 by Hamilton Clarke. We are glad to see the latter talented composer coming to the front again. Amongst many arrangements and adaptations (as though there was not sufficient original organ music), the best numbers are those by Dr. Martin, the organist of St. Paul's Cathedral.

National Melodies (J. Muir Wood & Co., Glasgow), for harmonium or American organ, by J. E. R. Senior. The well-known Scotch airs are here arranged and harmonised in the simplest manner possible, and whilst they present no difficulties to the average performer, they will give pleasure to all alike.

FOR VIOLIN.

Danse de Bizarre (Orpheus Music Publishing Co.), by Claude S. Fenigstein. A well-written piece by a promising young student at Trinity College, London. The copy before us does not change pizz. to arco after the introduction, an evident omission.

Six Pieces (Novello & Co.), by J. D. Davis, *Bagatelles*, by Percy Pitt, and *Six Easy Pieces*, by H. Grossheim, are all valuable additions to violin music.

We have also received arrangements of works, intended for piano or other instruments, by Siegfried Jacoby and Alfred Moffat. Surely there is plenty of original violin music without these transcriptions?

Canzona (Laudy & Co.), one of two pieces composed by Sidney H. Hann. It is needless to notice that it is well-written for violin, coming, as it does, from the pen of one of our famous "orchestral" families. Why have a French title-page?

Allegrezza, by Ludwig Schötte, *Melodie*, by Louis Schneider, are both good, but not so important as a *Capriccio* by Willem ten Have. We recommend all three to the notice of amateur players.

Second Romance, by Tivadar Nachèz, contains some extraordinary modulation, and a very winning theme to commence with; it is by no means easy to play.

CANTATAS FOR GIRLS.

Novello & Co. We have received the following Cantatas containing two-part choruses and solos, well-adapted to the needs of classes and Choral Societies. *The Home of Titania*, Berthold Tours, a graceful musicianly piece of work; *A Sea Dream*, by Battison Haynes—this contains recitation also; *Little Red Riding Hood*, clever music but with feeble words; *Summer by the Sea*, by Luard Selby; *Village Scenes*, by F. H. Cowen, and *Snow Fairies*, by Myles B. Foster. Also two children's operettas, *The Silver Penny*, by J. L. Roeckel, and *Red Riding Hood's Reception*, by T. Facer.

HER OWN WAY.

By EGLANTON THORNE, Author of "Aldyth's Inheritance," "The Studio Mariano," etc.

CHAPTER IV. CONTRITION.

SALOME GRANT seated herself at the tea-table behind the steaming urn. The clock on the mantelpiece had just struck six, and six was the hour at which they took their evening meal. The fact that Juliet had not yet come in was no reason

for delaying it. Salome prided herself on her punctuality. Juliet could hardly be said to know what punctuality meant.

It was always Salome who made the tea, and her tea was excellent. She, indeed, attended generally to the house-keeping. Carefully trained by the Scotch cousin, in whose home she had passed so many years, Salome had developed

into as notable a housekeeper as her teacher. She was well versed in the niceties belonging to every department of domestic management. Her jams were always clear, her cakes light; her store cupboard never seemed to get out of order, and it was a pleasure to look into the linen-press, for Salome was a first-rate needlewoman also, and prided herself on the way she marked and kept the household linen.

Mrs. Tracy was well pleased, on the whole, to leave the care of the household in her daughter's capable hands. She was conscious that she was herself by no means a model housekeeper. As she moved with Captain Tracy from station to station, she had kept house in a careless, happy-go-lucky fashion, and the Captain had never grumbled, though he seldom found it convenient to dine with his wife. But their expenses, though there was little to show for them, had mounted up wonderfully, and Mrs. Tracy had always an uneasy sense that she was being cheated without being able to discover where the fraud originated. Ere long they went to India, and

there, as everyone knows, housekeeping differs considerably from the prosaic ordering of an English home. So Mrs. Tracy, on her return from abroad, had been thankful to find Salome such a clever manager, with quite an old head on her young shoulders. The mother, with her delicate health and languid dislike to exertion, had gradually fallen into the position of a merely nominal ruler content to perform only such functions as her powerful prime minister would permit.

It had been necessary for Salome to leave school very early, though for some years afterwards she had pursued the study of music, with the result that she was now able, by giving lessons, to earn a sum which more than covered her modest personal expenses. There were times when Salome felt keenly the deficiencies in her education and the poverty of her mental attainments compared with those of Hannah. But her sister never assumed airs of superiority. She was always ready to assure Salome that she had a special gift for domestic economy, and served the family interests



or any of my sisters, is that you hate Phylas as much as I do."

The slave girl started as if fearful that the rash speech of her mistress might be overheard. "Oh, you need not be afraid," said the Vestal. "I heard him say he was going to see the lions fight with the Nazarenes in the new circus. No one can hear us."

Thus reassured Chloris allowed Æmilia to go on. The antipathy which the latter had felt to the priest on her first introduction to him had been increasing as the years had passed away. It was still to a certain extent instinctive, and though in their talks together the Vestal and the slave had sometimes tried to define the grounds for this dislike, they had never entirely or to their own satisfaction succeeded. They both distrusted him, and that was enough for the present. Whether they were justified or not in their suspicions the future alone would show.

"Phylas is very fond of the shows in the circus," said Æmilia. "But he always seems most eager to see the Nazarenes fight. Are they the same people as the Christians of whom I have heard him speak?"

"I think so," said Chloris. "They say that our gods are false, and that men should only worship one God, who was crucified about thirty years ago. It is a curious belief, but, from what I hear, they seem very harmless folk. Some say they do horrid things at their feasts, and kill and eat little children and drink their blood. Others say that they pretend that their leader came to life after being three days in the grave, and that when they meet together to sing, they plot to make him king. Nero, Phylas says, is very angry, and has issued a proclamation that all Nazarenes—men, women, and children—shall be thrown to the beasts."

Æmilia shuddered. "That is horrible, though if what you say is true, it would be better perhaps for the little ones to be torn to pieces in the arena than to be killed by their parents. Do you think it is true?"

"I do not," said the Greek decidedly. Then lowering her voice to a whisper, and placing her lips against Æmilia's pink ear, she added, "I know it is not true."

"How do you know that?"

"Because I have been to one of their gatherings. It was held one night outside the city, near where the Appian and Latin Ways meet. I crept out of the temple after you had finished your *cana*."

"What did you see?" asked Æmilia in awe-struck tones.

"I heard a man talk, and then they sang together, and all seemed so happy. There were old people there who said that they had seen the Nazarene Jesus, and that he had told them that those who followed Him should have lives of suffering and shame, but that death was only the beginning of another life of happiness and joy. Then the first speaker said that death was not an eternal sleep, as the Romans believe. I saw, too, that there were noble ladies among these Christians, and slaves also."

"Did you see any children there?" asked Æmilia.

"There were many little ones," said Chloris, "and their fathers and mothers seemed to show them much more love than the Romans show to their children."

Æmilia was silent for a few moments. Then she said—

"Did they speak about our Holy Temple of Vesta?"

"They said that there would come a time when all the temples in Rome would be de-

stroyed, and that men would cease to worship false gods. When I heard this I was frightened, and came away. Do you think that such people ought to be thrown to the beasts?"

"Truly I do," said Æmilia after another pause. "But it is a horrible death."

When the Vestals met at their sumptuous evening meal the eldest priestess announced her intention of being present on the following day at the gladiatorial contest, which was to be of special splendour and interest.

"You are now old enough, Æmilia, to come with us," she added; "the emperor will be going, and I hear that there is to be a combat between the great Nubian lion, Ajax, and a young Nazarene, who is said to be of unusual strength and stature. It is our duty to be there, and by going we do honour to the goddess whom we worship."

Marcella spoke as quietly as if she were describing a visit to Baia. She was tenderness itself towards her younger sisters, and it was only when the heresies of those who refused to share her creed were in question that the hardness and coldness of the Roman were at once discernible. She was an enthusiast for Paganism—that was all.

The conversation became general, except so far as Æmilia was concerned. She heard strange stories of contests between wild creatures, and of the splendid prowess of gladiators, when the whole body of sightseers—emperor, senators, knights, and plebs—rose with common accord, and by turning down their thumbs decreed that the life of some favourite fighter should be spared. No wonder that Æmilia, the daughter of a race in which disregard for human life was habitual, should be moved with curiosity and interest.

But her dreams that night were troubled.

(To be continued.)

MUSIC.

"Melting Murmurs"—Byron.

"Consuming Ecstasies"—Tennyson.

HOMELESS I wandered through the world and saw the homes of men.

Here, as the night grew blacker without, the fire glowed more ruddy within, and through the diamond-paned windows I saw the cottage group around the hearth; the mother rocking her babe's cradle with her foot, yet wielding her needle with ever-busy fingers; the father, labour-stained but happy, sunned by his wife's smile and his home's light. Before the cheerful fire was the frugal meal outspread. But I have no home—why linger here?

I rode on; and here were two beneath the trees in the evening light, who, whispering, spoke of the home they two would have together, the sweet home each was to the other, anywhere in the wide world. God have mercy upon him who has no Home upon another's breast!

A great house now—and yet a home—with parks and wide lawns sweeping round it, and within, all the elegant and luxurious refinements that taste can plan or money purchase. These do not make home, but Home was there, for love was there—the love which had lasted for fifty long years between the old Earl and his lady, the love which the noble children bore for them and for each other as they grew to manhood, and the love of all for their ancestral home. . . . Noiseless, I passed through long corridors and wide halls, libraries and galleries, then paused a moment outside the warm bright study where the Earl was kissing his white-haired wife, as he had kissed her when a bride. Then, moved by Music, I wandered to its source—it flowed from the fingers—nay, the soul—of a beautiful woman.

There, beautiful in the midst of beauty, she sat and played. Lovely pictures looked down on her; a long vista of palms and lilies stretched behind her, and trellised stephanotis and priceless orchids; sweet scents perfumed the nectared air; soft lights were interwoven through the room, mingled with the sunshine of her hair, and falling in rosy radiance on the whiteness of her neck; and exquisite statuary stood around, but the carved marble limbs were less perfect than hers. A greyhound lay at her feet, and was looking up at her with dumb eyes of adoring love—and I, in dumb adoring agony, was gazing too. Her bosom was hid by light draperies of lace, and rose and fell as she breathed the cadence of the music; her lithe, graceful form swayed with the motioned harmony; her white arms moved to and fro, and the white fingers were dripping with music, as if she had dipped them in a well of melody. What is she playing—ah! I can listen to her soul's outpouring and she will never know I heard. . . . Through sylvan scenes she now is gliding, and breathing the sweetness of summer, and gathering the songs of the air, and strewing flowers in her wake. And she is sighing—sighing:—

"Love, I love thee—I would that I might love thee, though I know thee not. All nature is blithe in its completeness, but I am sad with a want—the want of thee. Oh come, my knight, or up the leafy paths, or down the sylvan shade, come thou, my love, and I will love thee."

I lifted the curtain and drew a little nearer, but she was laughing now, laughing sweet trills of rippling laughter, thoughtless as the sunshine, innocent as the dawn, childlike as a child—and then she wearied a little of merriment, and dreamed into a minor key, and I could not follow her dreams.

"And have you no word for him that is homeless," I cried, "no thought for him that loves unloved, no song for the heart that is songless!"

She heard not—for she was playing on—sailing over silver seas, and wandering amongst far western isles, and dipping in the sunset clouds, and bathing in the morning dew. And then she thought of water, gentle, trembling rainbow-drops; and splashing, bright cascades; and torrents, turbid, turbulent, thundering from height to depth, and dashing unresisted on. Then the necklace flashed upon her snowy throat, and rose upon her heaving breast as Passion stirred within her—the passion of music, the passion of woe, and the passion of love. And she sobbed wild chords, and wailed in minor agonies till my heart beat fast, and the "tears by other griefs untaught," burst forth for her—yet, after all, what could she know of sorrow?—and I drew near, I, the un-comforted, to comfort her. But she was only romancing of pain she knew not, for she let the passion die again in simple melody, and the lustrous fire in her eyes faded to a softer light, and mildly she wandered over the keys in gentle, well-known airs. Then she began to sing—not as the birds sing, nor as the angels, but as she only sings. She sang the quaint ballads that chased away the shadows from the far corners of the great room, sang the sweet old tunes that make us smile and weep—then, with a glad smile, as if there were no woes in all the world, she played that sweetest, mournfullest of airs, that saddest song that e'er was sung—

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home."

* * * * *

And I dropped the curtain and went out into the night.

OSGOOD HARTIER.