

Of Interest to Women.

MORE ON WEALTH.

In this article we are going to talk about material wealth, as far as possible we shall shut our minds against other meanings of the word however attractive, and pin ourselves down to the plain L.S.D. or "almighty dollar."

This is the kind of wealth about which so many hard things are said. It is "filthy, lucre," and the love of it is the "root of all evil." We hear of the "deceitfulness of riches," and we remember the story of how Croesus, the multi-millionaire of ancient times, displayed his treasures to Solon, asking whether the sage did not consider him happy to be the possessor of so much wealth. "I cannot tell," answered the wise Athenian, "till I have seen the end of your life." Did he mean only that riches sometimes take themselves wings and fly away; or did he mean that the possession of wealth is not enough to ensure happiness, that besides the having, there must be the power and the opportunity to spend wisely and well; or that all the gold in the world will not save a man from the pangs of disappointment, jealousy or bereavement? Any one of the three, or all together he may have meant.

Croesus still occupies the attention of the wise. Not long ago I read a very wise and very ponderous novel about an unfortunate young man whose income ran into millions. I think he worked it out that he would, on his father's death be in receipt of about 22 a second. I grew weary, as one so often does grow weary, in the mazes of his difficulties over those millions and the pursuit of happiness, but I think he committed suicide in the end.

On the other hand, I can see any day in the Invercargill streets, people with pinched and care-worn faces, poor clothes and eyes like those of suffering animals. Women they are mostly, and their whole appearance proclaims the stress and strain of holding together ends that barely meet.

Evidently wealth may be defined as that which a few people have too much of and many too little.

Wealth has two sides, a getting, and a spending. Women possibly know more about the spending than the getting; now to spend money wisely is no less difficult than to earn it honestly. John Ruskin considered most writers on "Economics" to be in grievous fault because they had left this very matter of spending out of their reckoning. What do we spend money for? To provide the necessities of life first, and then to procure happiness—to enable us to live and then to make life worth living.

Having laid down this definition, we find it leading us to some curious reflections. The amount of money needed to enable one to live is very small. The Old Age Pensions in this country used to fix it at 10s a week before the war. Has anyone heard of the pension being raised on account of the increased cost of living? I don't remember to have heard it, but then I am negligent in the matter of reading the newspaper. Supposing we put the figure now at £1 a week, or even 30s, it is evident that the bulk of our income does not go to keep us alive. It goes to the far more important business of making life worth living. What we pay for the amenities of life is vastly in excess of what we spend on the necessities; and rightly too, for who wants to live a mere existence, a life not worth living?

The next question is, what can money buy that does make life worth while. Quite a number of things, but what things, depends on the taste of the individual. A bicycle, a motor car, or an aeroplane, a new six-roomed bungalow, or a shack at Otatara, a palace or a trip round the world, a graphophone and Caruso records, a new frock, silk stockings, a seat at the pictures, or a drive in a taxi out to Wallacetown—all these are merely samples of many things that in various people's minds, contribute to make life worth living. There are even some misguided individuals who think a keg of beer, drunk in the wet bush up the Waihopai, something worth having. Consequently they spend their money on it.

The problem of all problems is to teach people a better taste in these things. Taste, according to Ruskin, is the most important thing about a man; for what he likes, that he will do and seek. I noticed recently in the "Southland Times" a paragraph on the difficulties of the Frenchmen in dealing with their financial situation and the women's silk stockings. In order to raise the value of the franc, they wanted to prohibit the import of silk stockings. The women objected. Silk stockings are among the small things that make life worth living to them. One large manufacturer (of something else) plaintively declared that the women in his employ spent more on silk stockings than they did on food and drink. One would like to know what that manufacturer's

wife and daughter spent on silk stockings, and why he was surprised at the state of affairs in a world where women have been by experience taught to look to elegance of dress as a chief means to attract those attentions and favours that go to make life easy and pleasant. The men desire to win the money and spend it on those women whom they admire. They openly express their admiration for trim ankles; why should they complain if women buy silk stockings?

(To be continued.)

Children's Column.

Dear children, this is a little story sent in by an Invercargill girl aged 13. We are publishing it just as we received it and think it very good. Mater would be very pleased to receive little stories from children, so see what you can do and address your letter to "Mater," care Editor "Digger," Box 310, Invercargill.

HOW BETTY'S WISH WAS GRANTED.

"Oh! nurse dear, if I could only see the Prince! I would never be cross and tiresome to you again," sighed little Betty, an inmate of the children's ward of one of our large hospitals. "If only one of the good fairies you told me about, would just whisper in his ear, that there was a sick little girl (who had lost her dear daddy in that dreadful war), just longing to see him."

"Well, dear," said the kind nurse, smoothing her pillow, "fairies quite often grant good children their wishes."

So Betty, thinking of the Prince and the fairies, fell asleep, and while she slept she dreamed she saw the Prince enter the ward and walk about among the cots. At last he came and stood beside her's, and, taking her hand in his, said, "Dear little girl, I have come from his Majesty the King, to thank you for the great sacrifice your dear father made, in laying down his life for his King and country."

With the sound of sweet band music, Betty awoke to find that her dream was true, and that the Prince was really standing beside her cot, smiling down at her, and saying kind words about her daddy.

The nurse, knowing the child's great wish, unknown to Betty, had placed at the head of the cot a card with the words, "The child of one of our fallen heroes," written on it.

So Betty's wish was granted, and she evermore believes in fairies.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.

MARY CONTRAIRY.

Miss Mary Contrairy, so story-books say, would live in the garden the whole of the day; with silver-bell flowers, and cockle-shells fine; and pretty maid blossoms all standing in line!

But Mary Contrairy—poor darling, there's more to hear of the reason she lived out-of-door. She dared not go into the cottage, not she; for there she was treated, oh, so cruelly!

Poor Mary Contrairy! When she was quite wee, an old witch had picked her up under a tree had taken her home and treated her so, that Mary's short life had been quite filled with woe!

The Witch had four daughters, Amelia and Ann, Ophelia and Delia. "And do what I can," poor Mary would sob, "yet I can't please those girls; they shout at me so, that my poor head quite whirled!"

"They call me Contrairy; they call me a goose; they call me a silly! So what is the use of staying indoors, where I cry till I'm blind? I'll go to the garden; the flowers are kind!"

So out in the garden poor Mary would stay the most of the night and the whole of the day. She'd talk to the flowers, and water them, too, and dig them and hoe them, and see that they grew.

And so, though Ophelia, Amelia, and Ann, and Delia did all that such nasty girls can do to make the child's life just as hard as they could, yet plants were her friends, and that did Mary good!

But oh! one sad morning when Mary came round to talk to her flowers and dig up the ground, she saw the earth hard and the wind blew so chill; and all of her darlings looked drooping and ill.

"Dear Mary," they sobbed out, "Dear Mary, good-bye! The winter is coming, and though we shan't die, we can't stand the cold, dear, and so we must go. Dear Mary, good-bye, you will miss us, we know!"

Oh, poor little Mary, how lonely she was; she'd no one to play with; she'd no toys because she'd never had presents; she'd no toys, not one; and all through the winter she'd no games for fun!

But one night she happened to hear witch-girl Ann and all of her sisters at chat on a plan. "Oh, Christmas is coming!" said they "Cherrie! For Santa

brings presents at Christmas, we know! "We'll ask him for ball-dresses, bangles, and rings and bracelets and brooches and all kinds of things!" And when their long list came at last to an end. "I wish Santa'd give me," sighed Mary, "a friend!"

Oh dear, what a noise! How those four bad girls screamed. "To think," cried they all, "that you'd dare to have dreamed that you'd get gifts, Mary! Indeed, what a joke!"—they held their fat sides just as if they would choke.

'Twas no laughing matter for Mary; "Oh! Oh!" she sobbed, and she ran alone out in the snow. "Oh, flowers," she cried, "Oh, I know you can't hear because you are sleeping, but still you are near!"

"And I'm so unhappy!" but, just as she spoke, the sound of sweet silver-bells ringing awoke. "We're deep in the ground," called the flowers; "but come, dear Mary, creep down, we will find you a home!"

"Walk, on, you're quite safe!" rang the silver-bells true. "Walk on, find a home!" called the Pretty Maids, too. "Walk on, darling Mary," the cockle-shells said, as Mary walked under her own garden-bed!

Oh, on, on she walked; oh, a long way she passed; but she wasn't frightened, and, sudden, at last, why, there was a great forest, stretching so wide, and there was a wee cottage by the road-side!

And there was a sledge drawn up outside the door, oh, filled up with toys till it could hold no more; and out of the cottage that minute there ran the dearest and kindest white-bearded old man!

But when he saw Mary he pulled up his deer. "My darling," he called, "how on earth came you here? You've tears on your cheeks; tell me why, dear, because—I love little children, and I'm Santa Claus!"

"All through the long year while I'm making my toys for all little children—good girls and good boys—I want a wee girlie to laugh round and play and dress all the dollies and have her own way!"

"So, will you not live here?" and Santa Claus smiled, and Mary Contrairy, the poor lonely child, ran into his arms, and was hugged, oh, so tight, and she's lived in Santa Claus' Land since that night!

The Home.

TO CLEAN HAIRBRUSHES.

A good recipe which will keep the bristles stiff is as follows: Pour into an open dish a dessertspoonful of ammonia to a quart of cold water. Dip the brush into this, moving up and down and taking care not to wet the back of the brush. In this way the bristles will be clean and white in less than a minute, and without any rubbing. Then dip the brush into clear water, shake, and place in a rack to dry.

TO PRESERVE EGGS.

(1) To preserve the interior of the egg in its natural state it is necessary to seal up the pores of the shell air-tight. This may be done by dipping them in melted suet, olive oil, milk of lime, solution of gum arabic, or covering them with any air-proof varnish. They are then packed in bran, oats, meal, salt, ashes, or charcoal powder. (2) The French way of preserving eggs is to dissolve 4ozs. of beeswax in 8ozs. of warm olive oil; in this put the tip of the finger, and anoint the egg all round. The oil will immediately be absorbed by the shell and the pores filled up by the wax. If kept in a cool place the eggs will keep for a long time.

WASH FOR SHAMPOOING.

(1) An excellent wash may be made by dissolving 3oz. carbonate of ammonia and 1oz borax in 1 quart of water and adding 2oz of glycerine, three quarts of rum, and one quart bay rum. The hair, having then been moistened with this liquor, is to be shampooed with the hands and a slight lather is formed, and the latter, being then washed out with clean water, leaves the head clean and the hair moist and glossy. (2) Beat up the yolk of an egg in a pint of rain-water, add a teaspoonful of glycerine and half an ounce of rosemary spirit. Rub this well into the head, and then rinse in plenty of warm rain-water.

TIGHTENING CANE BOTTOM CHAIRS

(1) If the canes on the chairs are not broken, the following will be found an excellent method: Turn the chair upwards, and with hot water and soap well wash the canework, using a sponge so that it may become completely soaked. Let it dry in the open air, or in a place where there is a thorough draught. If the cane is not thoroughly clean when dry repeat the operation, and when the cane is dry it

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THE BUTCHER IN LOVE.

Dear heart I'm in an awful stew,
How to re-veal my love to you;
I'm such a mutton-head, I fear;
I feel so sheepish when you're near.
I know it's only cow-ardice
That makes these lam-entations rise.
I dread a cut-let me explain,
A single roast would give me pain;
I should not like to get the hooks,
And dare not steak my hopes to hooks.
I never saw-sage eyes as thine.
If you would butcher hand in mine,
And liver round me every day,
We'd seek some ham-let far away;
We'd meat life's frown with loves caress
And cleaver road to happiness.