

Of Interest to Women.

ECONOMICS AND ECONOMY.

Most people are profoundly ignorant of the mysteries of high finance. They hear that fortunes may be made or unmade in an hour; and if this be true, it does not take the wisdom of Solomon to see that such fortunes are made by gambling, and it stands to reason that all money made by gambling, is money for which no return whatever is given, money not made but merely taken—"collared," to use a slang term—from somebody else. A kind of inkling steals then into the backs of a good many people's minds that high finance is a realm of jugglery whence come (like the increasing pennies in the conjuror's trick), the higher prices of everything they have to buy.

Financial experts talk, or are reported in the newspapers to be talking, about the inflated currency; but the man in the street and the woman in the kitchen are not clear as to how this particular bogey acts. They only know the old vicious circle; the workman gets an increase in wages, the teacher an increase in salary, and so forth; then the income tax goes up, and the Borough raises the rates and the sanitary bill, and the cost of gas and electricity, and charges a lighting rate on an occupied section. Letters cost 2d instead of 1½d, and the telephone charges are raised. Soon butter will be 2s 6d a pound, so 'tis said, and we are to be grateful to a paternal government for sugar at 6d to 6½d. And when you've recovered from these things and faced the children's boot bill, where is your increase in salary? I suppose, like the frog in the fable, things will go on swelling until some day they—"bust."

Meanwhile the unenlightened in matters financial, may dimly perceive one or two things. The first of these is that the seeds of all this disorder were there in our economic system before the war; that they only needed war conditions to bring them on and we now reap a harvest that has not grown in a night from nothing. One of these seeds, the commonest of all, is the competition of everyone against everyone else without co-ordination or co-operation among the various sections of the community. Every unit and every class is fighting for itself regardless of the interests of others. At the time when we should be fitting of dovetailing in order to save energy, time, and money, and to prevent waste, we are running about getting in one another's way. How would a household fare if two of the members undertook in rivalry to feed or clothe it; it might seem to be doing very well until it remembered that it was paying for the activities of both. And so with a community; it may seem to be better served by two bakery firms than by one, but it is paying for both, and for all the overlapping they do.

Another thing that the unenlightened do dimly perceive is that there are too many people employed in useless occupations; we have a multiplicity of agents and kindred folk all very busy making a pecking out of our community. Some persons of the kind do doubt we must have, but we actually have a surplus—and that in a kind of occupation where we ought to exercise the strictest social economy. For the matter of that, no doubt we have far too many editors and reporters, and lawyers and members of Parliament for strict economy. The truth is that while many people are very methodical and economical in private affairs, the whole public economy is enormously wasteful and chaotic. I do not mean merely in municipal, or governmental affairs, I mean in social structure, in the economic organisation of society. Here there is waste and disorganisation, a conspicuous lack of economy in the popular sense of the term, everywhere, such as no careful housewife would tolerate for a week in her household affairs.

Meanwhile we must do what we can to make ends meet, though we should also be trying to understand the disease from which we suffer, so that we may intelligently co-operate in the cure. The majority of women are finding out ways of economising such as they never thought of before. Stockings can be darned for longer time, coats and skirts may be turned and so two made from one piece of material, gloves may be dispensed with to some degree, and so forth.

In the household management, I believe a great economy would be effected in the cost of food if women would study the cooking of vegetables more carefully. There are plenty of people who have no ideas beyond boiling vegetables in a large quantity of water and serving them up, after straining, deprived of a good percentage of their food value. Now vegetables should be boiled if they are boiled at all, in as little water as possible, and the stock used to make sauce, so that none of the healthy and nourishing properties are

lost. Baked vegetables, or those boiled and then baked, are more savoury and appetising; and by the aid of a good look on vegetable cookery, dozens of the tastiest dishes may be made, which would enable households to replace meat without loss to enjoyment or fitness. And since vegetables may be grown by every family in Invercargill at very small cost, it is evident that any woman who studied their possibilities thoroughly and intelligently, could save a deal in the cost of feeding her household.

Inordinate flesh-eaters might feel it hard lines to be deprived of meat three times a day; but they would really be more healthy and last longer in good condition if they confined themselves to three times a week.

Of course it is the wage-earner or salaried person who feels most the increased cost of living. The income of these classes is so very definite, so strictly limited; but the economics forced upon the wage-earners and salaried people must return upon the trades people. When your customers cannot afford to buy your goods, your business is apt to look rather blue, no matter what line you are in. And if things go as they are going, a time must come when the great majority cannot afford to buy anything except the barest necessities. The boot will pinch somewhere, the great puzzle is to make it pinch at the right point. What is the class that can best afford to retrench? Or rather, a more profitable question, how can we keep our heads above water, and at the same time contribute our best towards the solution of the world's problem. One thing we can do; we can do our own work thoroughly and generously, to the limit of our time and ability, and if we have to choose work, we can choose useful and productive work; work that will make us feeders of the commonwealth, not parasites.

Children's Column.

MATER'S LETTER BOX.

M.D.M., East Road, we are glad to welcome you to the Children's Column. Your story will be published next week—Mater.

Edna, Clifton., this is your first introduction to the Children's Column and we are glad to hear from you. Your story will be published next week—Mater.

Mater invites children to send in stories for this column, or correspondence which will be replied to through these columns. All matter to be clearly written in ink, and on one side of the paper only. Name, age, and address, must be clearly given, and correspondence directed to "Mater," care of Editor, "The Digger," Box 310, Invercargill.

THE KING OF HONEYLAND.

(By Patricia, Ettrick street).

The King of Honeyland, who was neither too young nor too old, had risen one morning and was sitting on a chair in his bedroom. His minister of the household stood before him holding the royal stocking, one of them had a hole in the toe. Now, although the minister presented the hose as adroitly as possible, in order to hide the sad defect from the king's eye, and although the king, in a general way, thought more of shining boots than of mended stockings, it so happened that in the present instance the hole did catch the royal eye. The monarch, to the horror of his minister, snatched at the stocking, and plunging his hand into it till his finger with the signet ring appeared through the hole at the other end, said with a dolorous sigh:—

"It is all very well for me to be king, but I am sadly in want of a queen. Now what should you say if I married?"

"Your majesty," said the minister, "this is a wise and noble thought. I should myself have ventured to suggest it, but for a certain anticipation that it could not fail sooner or later to flash spontaneously upon the royal mind."

"That is settled, then," said the king. "But do you think I shall easily find a suitable queen?"

"Not a doubt of it," answered the minister.

"Ah, but you must remember I am not easily satisfied. A princess, to please me, must be both lovely and wise. And you know how I love apple-fritters. If I marry a wife, she must certainly know how to make apple-fritters!"

"I am convinced that you will find a princess who knows all about apple-fritters," the minister replied.

"I cannot make apple-fritters, but I can make nice cheese cakes. Don't you think that will do?" said the first princess to

whom the king proffered his enquiry.

"No, I have a particular liking for apple-fritters," she was told.

The second princess did not even wait for the king's question, but asked him coolly if he under beating the kettle drum. When he said he did not, she would not listen to a word of his suit. After some pleading, however, she graciously said that ideals did not realise, and since the king seemed an honest sort of man, she would waive the point and accept him as her husband.

For a year and a day the king and his beautiful bride lived in happiest concord. One day, however, the king rose out of bed the wrong way, things taking to going wrong in consequence. His crown dropped, and was brought to him with a great bend in it; presently the court painter arrived with the new map of the kingdom, and the king examining it, found that the frontiers had been coloured red instead of blue, and finally the queen sent word that she had a headache.

Thus it happened that the royal couple fell out for the first time, the queen insisting on having the last word whenever they spoke. At last she taunted her spouse with his ignorance of the kettledrum. But the words had scarcely escaped her when her royal husband retorted: "And you cannot make apple-fritters!" Then the queen, for the first time, had not an answer back and sat sobbing in her boudoir, but the king was pacing his own floor with delight at having had the last word, till suddenly he walked from his room into the corridor; he felt something warm and clining, "Hallo, what is this?" he cried.

"Only me," said the queen, "I was coming to beg your pardon," she added humbly. On hearing this, the king who had come to seek hers, now abandoned his intention and magnanimously took her into his arms, straightway making a law that two words, "kettledrum" and "apple-fritters" should never be heard again in his kingdom.

THE FIRE FAIRY.

(By Isabel, Elles Road, Invercargill).

It was a bitterly cold day, so cold that nurse said Grace, could not go out, and so sat quietly by the fire until tea was ready. She sat in her armchair and watched the flames dancing and sparkling in the fire. She loved to do so, for she often saw pictures there,—caves in which fairies dwelt, and high rocks where robbers lived, and nurse often told her tales about them. She was just thinking how delightful it would be to have another little girl to sit by the fire with her, when, looking up, she saw a little man dressed in red velvet from head to foot.

"Who are you," she asked.

"I am a fire fairy," was the reply, "would you like me to talk to you for a little while?"

"Yes please," said Grace, "but are you always in the fire?"

"Oh yes! always when it's alight, but I generally stay there," answered the fairy, "only you were so sad at not going out, so I came out to-day to try and cheer you up."

"Thank you," said Grace.

"I have had a curious life, and a long one," continued the little red man. "Ages ago I was a fire fairy and lived in the midst of a wood with great tall trees of fir and pine; then I wore a green coat, but I think this is prettier, don't you?"

"Indeed, I do," said Grace, "it's so cheerful and bright."

"But," said he, "I had lovely times in that wood. On moonlight nights we danced under the trees, the mushrooms were our tents, and the glow-worms crept round and made tiny lamps to decorate our feasting-place."

"Why did you leave the forest if it was so delightful?" inquired Grace.

"It happened like this," replied the fairy. "I went to sleep for a long, long time, and I remembered nothing more until I suddenly awoke to find myself inside your fire, dressed in red. But I must go now," continued the fairy, "Good-bye."

Just then the clock struck five. "Wake up dearie," said nurse, "you've had a nice sleep."

"Oh no, a fairy has been talking to me," said Grace, and then she told nurse all about it.

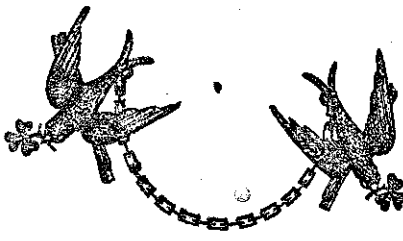
ROVER AND HIS MASTER.

(By Margaret, Oreti Plains).

"Come, Rover," said Harry, as he passed a fine old Newfoundland dog that lay on the mat at the door. "Come, Rover! I am going down to the river to sail my boat and I want you to go with me."

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DEE STREET, INVERCARGILL.

Rover opened his large eyes and looked lazily at his master.

"Come, Rover! Rover!"

But the dog did not care to move, and so Harry went off to the river-side alone. He had not been gone a great while before a thought of her boy came suddenly into the mother's mind. Remembering that he had a little vessel and the river was near, it occurred to her that he might have gone there.

"Is Harry with you?" she called up to Harry's father, who was in his study. But Harry's father said he was not there. "I'm afraid he's gone to the river with his boat," said his mother.

Mr Lee dropped his pen and came quickly down and hurried from the house.

Rover was still lying upon the mat.

"Rover!" he said, "Where is Harry? Has he gone to the river. Away and see, quick!" The dog must have understood every word and he rushed toward the river. Mr Lee followed as fast as he could run. When he reached the river bank, he saw his boy in the river with Rover dragging him towards the shore. He was just in time to receive the half-drowned child and carry him to his mother. After this, Rover would never leave the side of his master, and wherever you saw Harry, you were sure to see Rover.

The Home.

MARMALADE (POORMAN).

Making marmalade in the ordinary way is tiresome work for the busy mother of a family. The following is an easy way of making it, and it is delicious.

Ingredients.—Five Poorman oranges, 2 lemons, 10 Breakfasts cups of cold water, 9lb of sugar.

Method.—Wash the fruit, dry and quarter it, remove the pips and pass it through the mincer. Stand the fruit in a dish or large jug and pour over it the water. Cover and let stand for twenty-four hours. Boil quickly for an hour, then add the sugar and boil for one and a-half hours. Bottle and cover while hot. Warm the bottles before pouring in the marmalade. Make a fairly thick paste of flour and cold water, and you will find this stick splendidly for covering purposes. The fruit certainly does not look so nice after coming through the mincer as when hand-cut, but when to fruit is cooked there is no difference and it saves so much labour. Try it once and you will never do it any other way. The writer used the largest force on the mincer.

CURE FOR CORNS.

Remove any hard skin, then for several nights apply the juice of a lemon, in which has been dissolved a small piece of common pearl. This will destroy corns without pain or injury to the flesh. Corns should never be cut with a razor or other steel instrument, as the operation is most dangerous, even if carried out by an expert pedicurist. Soften the corn by placing over

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it a pad of wool smeared with a liberal amount of lanoline; it can then be easily removed with the finger nail.

HOT POT OF RABBIT.

Wash and remove all bones easily detached. At the bottom of a deep dish overlap a layer of thick slices of potato, and on top place part of the rabbit, sprinkling with very finely chopped onion, salt and pepper. Add a little cold up pickled pork or bacon before repeating the layers of potato and rabbit. Cover the dish with seasoned water. Bake slowly for two hours, covering the top with an inverted dish during the last hour. Brush over with warm butter or fat after removing the dish. Serve the liver, kidneys and pieces of bone in gravy to serve with the pie.

Mr G. A. Lamb, who has been carrying on Southland on behalf of the scheme for the Co-operative Marketing of Produce, has secured the season's output from the Woodend and Tuatapere factories.