

THE OLD HILLACRE HOMESTEAD

W HY, it's redik!" declared Aunt Melzema Mellen. "Perfectly owdacious!" agreed Uncle Simeon.

"Does the gal expect to live on grass an' yarbs, like the cow-brutes?" grumbled Cousin Gideon.

"She better of took the five hundred dollars Squire Stafford offered her," said Uncle Simeon, sagely. "It's more'n the ole place is worth, half rocks, an' the rest growed up with mullain stalks an' hoarhound an' wild chommonile."

And so the chorus went on among the Mellen and Hillacre relations, far and near, and all because Mollie Hillacre, self-willed girl, refused to part with the old homestead and its twenty acres of sterile soil, which had become hers on the death of Grandpa Hillacre, some few months previous.

Among all the clan there was no one to take Mollie's side of the question but old Uncle Dabney Mellen, who occupied the adjoining farm.

"Mollie ain't nobody's fool, I kin tell ye," he would say, nodding his head wisely. "An' ef she hangs onto the old homestead she'll make it pay, one way or another, or my name ain't Dabney Mellen."

But the other relatives only shook their heads forebodingly and declared that "a willful woman must have her own way," and they washed their hands of her entirely.

"As she makes her bed, so she must lay in it," declared Uncle Simeon, tritely. "An' if she comes to grief she needn't spect us to help her out."

"Of course not," echoed the rest.

But still Mollie persisted in "taking her own head," in spite of their predictions and prognostications.

Even Steve Kimble, Mollie's affianced lover, sided against her. He was a distant cousin on the Mellen side.

"What could we ever do here, Mollie?" he argued. "I couldn't make a livin' on this old worn-out ground! 'Tain't fit fur nothin' but black-eyed peas. Why, it wouldn't grow a bushel o' wheat to the acre! An' look at the ole sheep pasture. The ain't skeersely a blade o' grass on it all summer. But if we had the five hundred dollars I could set up a store at the crossroads, an' we'd soon be a gittin' rich."

"But I love the ole place, Steve," persisted Mollie. "I was born here, you know, and—"

"Shuck! What if you was?" interrupted Steve, impatiently. "Well, you kin have your choice, Mollie. If you think more o' the ole place than you do of me, why, keep it. But you can't have both, that's all."

"Steve," cried Mollie, "do you mean it?"

"Yes," returned Steve, sullenly, "I do mean it."

"There's your ring, then," said Mollie, quietly, "and good evening."

And she walked proudly up the grass-grown walk to the house, while Steve slung himself angrily away.

Here was fresh food for the gossips, for the news of Mollie's broken engagement soon spread abroad, and the tongues wagged and heads were shaken more than ever.

But Mollie paid no heed to their fault-finding.

"I must contrive some way to make a living," she told herself, "and why not try keepin' boarders? If the place is worth five hundred dollars to Squire Stafford, it's worth that much to me. The old house has rooms enough to quarter a regiment, nearly, and if the furniture is old-fashioned, it's well preserved, and I must make it do. I think I can get grandpa's ole house-keeper, Mrs. Hall, to stay and help me, as she has not made any engagement yet. And now for ways and means. The place is rocky, and worn out, to be sure, but I'll have the old stable torn away—it's ready to tumble down anyway—and take that place for my garden, and a shed will do for the cow. I can raise vegetables enough, with a little outside help, to pay for most of my groceries, and the old orchard and the berry patch, trimmed up a little, will bring quite a crop of fruit."

And having laid her plans, like a skillful general, Mollie went to work with a will.

Mrs. Hall's services were soon secured, and the old house put into "apple-pie" order.

The windows were scoured, curtains taken down, washed and ironed, and put up again. Carpets were taken up, cleaned, and put down again.

The old-fashioned, ponderous furniture was rubbed with turpentine till you could see yourself in the tall bedposts and chair backs, and the mirrors and brass fire irons were polished till they shone again.

Uncle Dabney Mellen, with his hired hand, came and pulled down the rickety stable, chopped up the old logs into firewood, and plowed and harrowed the garden, besides helping Mollie to plant it.

And when all was ready a few judicious advertisements brought Mollie the requisite number of boarders.

There were Mr. and Mrs. Smythe, a wealthy elderly couple, who were charmed with the big rooms, the old-fashioned, claw-legged tables and chairs, the vine-hung porches and verandas and the wholesome country fare.

There was Mrs. Fenshawe, a gushing widow, who went into raptures over the beautiful view of crusted hillsides

say, Mollie, when shall the weddin' be?"

But Mollie drew herself up with a show of spirit, as she retorted, coolly: "I don't know when your wedding will be, Mr. Kimble, but mine is to be the 1st of September. I've been engaged to Professor Tallman for two months."

And there was nothing for the disappointed Steve to do but hastily to take himself off.

Before Mollie's boarders left, in September, there was a merry wedding at the old homestead, to which all her relatives were invited; but the most honored among the guests was Uncle Dabney Mellen, his genial face aglow with good-natured triumph.

"I said our Mollie wasn't nobody's fool," he asserted, proudly. "An' I reckon she's proved it."

And nobody felt disposed to dispute the assertion.—The Housewife.

PUCK'S MODERN COOKBOOK.

Advance Sheets Secured from Publishers' at Great Cost.

Dressed celery—Bathe the celery carefully in tepid, soapy water. A Turkish bath, though advocated by some, is not necessary unless the celery has been playing out in the dirt. Dress each stalk daintily in various colors. A white Swiss muslin frock, with blue ribbons, is pretty, or a pale pink chiffon made up over green taffeta.

Cup cake—Take two coffee cups and a tea cup. Dresden china is best, but cauldron or other English ware will do. Break the cups into small bits after which pound them into powder. Sift this carefully into a bowl and add six eggs, also broken. Bake in a quick oven and when done sift a powdered sugar bowl over them. Little cup cakes are especially nice for afternoon teas.

Waffles—Take a large piece of sole leather, cut it into oblong shapes and mark it off into small squares. Fry in any old grease and serve with hot syrup. These are just too waffle for anything.

Ribbon cake—Take four yards, or say four yards and a half, of narrow blue ribbon, and a yard of light pink ribbon. Place these in a chopping bowl and mince into fine shreds. Add a spoonful of sewing silk and a paper of needles. Mix thoroughly and spread between layers of well-pounded cake.

Bath sponges—In a good-sized bath tub set several bath sponges to rise overnight. In the morning remove the sponges, squeeze well and add two ounces of powdered soap and an ounce of orris root. Make up into small buns, place carefully in a sponge basket and fry in boiling lard. When done sprinkle thickly with powdered sugar and serve with a whisk broom.

Live Woman Farmer.

Mrs. Nellie E. Lakin, of Boscawon, N. H., is said during the last year to have carried over \$500 worth of farm produce to the stores of Boscawon and Penacook, \$400 worth of which she raised on her own farm, doing the work almost wholly herself. Last summer she loaded and stowed away forty loads of hay. She raised 100 bushels of corn, cutting most of it up and husking all of it; also raised eighty-five bushels of potatoes, digging most of them herself and putting them into the cellar. Last fall she picked 200 bushels of apples. She did all the work in her garden, and had four cartloads of vegetables. She drove to Penacook once a week, missing but four weeks during the year, and all through last spring and since last September she has driven to Franklin twice a week to carry her 16-year-old son George to the Franklin High School. In addition to all this work, she has performed the household duties in a family of five, continues the Woman's Home Journal. When New Hampshire women can do farming in this energetic way, it is no wonder that in 103 granges of that State a majority of the members have recorded themselves in favor of female suffrage. Yet the opponents of equal rights for women will no doubt assure the public that the New Hampshire woman would be crushed under the burden of a ballot.

Pat's Plea.

The victory is not necessarily to the wordy. Some three years ago there was a strike of ore-handlers in one of the lake towns, and two gentlemen, one of whom was L. C. Hanna, brother of Senator Hanna, undertook to persuade the men to return to work. They got on very well—chiefly by compromise—with all except the engineers, says the New York Evening Post.

Finally a merchant of the town was mutually agreed upon as arbitrator, and it was arranged that both sides should argue before him the question of an increase in wages. Mr. Hanna represented the employers, while an engineer Pat Ryan, spoke for his fellows. Mr. Hanna made a long, elaborate argument, covering all the points he expected his opponent to raise. When he finished Pat got up.

"Mister Refree," said he, "th' byes wants th' raise!" Then he sat down.

A few hours later Mr. Hanna was telling of this, and had just expressed himself as certain that the decision would be in the employers' favor, when the telephone bell rang. The referee was at the other end. He informed the employers that he had reached a decision in favor of the men's demand for more wages.

Grand Ceremonies at St. Peter's.

Being in unusually good health, the pope intends closing his pontifical jubilee year with grand ceremonies at St. Peter's.

"I think a man can't keep a secret; think of the bad things he knows on himself."

DOINGS OF WOMEN

Tasks Performed by Women.

Man does a great task when he earns the money for the family. Sometimes he imagines that he then does all that can be expected of him. There is no work for a comparison of his labor with the many tasks a mother performs in a day would leave him at the little end of the argument. In some cases he would feel ashamed of the unequal division and would reform. That is precisely where we would like to corner him, wouldn't we? We don't want to foster a pride that will permit us to silently accept burdens. We want to find a way to shift them to broader shoulders without raising unpleasant feelings.

When financiers find themselves confronting an appalling mountain they do not attempt to climb it and waste both time and strength, and they will not sit down resignedly at its foot. They put their brains to work in solving out an easy and profitable way of skirting it. The same methods can be applied to the little things of life. We must refuse to climb mountains, which exhaust our strength, then find a means of getting around them, practically speaking, of finding somebody who has strength upon which we can call. Sons should be brought up to spare mothers and sisters, and husbands should be allowed to do as much for wives. If it is necessary to train them, do it, but so nicely that they will enjoy it. There is one splendid trait Southern men possess—they are protectors to women of all ages and status. They are born to it. Why cannot Northern men be brought up in the same fashion? Because women here are more self-reliant and show it? Perhaps.—Boston Traveler.

Type of the Women Wage Worker.



THE HILLACRE WOMEN

Wise Beyond Her Years.

"Why is it," queried the girl who is trying to solve the problem of how to dress well to the girl who thinks she knows, "that you wear all your prettiest pins and brooches at the back of your dress collars and the more ordinary ones in front? I do exactly the opposite."

"I don't mind so much—that is, within reason—about what people think who see me face to face," said the girl who dresses well, "but the people who criticize me behind my back do it more deliberately. Whatever my appearance may be, as I see myself face to face in the glass, I am resolved that no one shall say that my mirror has not two sides. One can protect one's face with a smile or a gesture, but the critic at the back has one entirely at his mercy."—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

The Effective Pepper-Bag.

If you have not a pepper-bag safely packed in your medicine chest, it is time you had. By the application of a pepper-bag the ineffable suffering that sometimes comes from a diseased tooth is often avoided. You can purchase these little pain-killers from your dentist; or one can easily make them. They are made of muslin (three-fourths of an inch in diameter) lined with rubber—to protect the lips and mouth from the pepper and ginger. Apply this directly to the spot and it will usually check the pain, for the time at least.

The Young Maidens of Syria on the eve of Palm Sunday gather on the hillsides and sing ballads on the resurrection of Lazarus. The next morning at sunrise they go to the nearest well and draw water. Then they form a ring and dance and sing songs.

The native Andamanese women have a curious custom. When a man dies his wife prepares his skull and wears it hanging at her side. There it answers the purpose of a treasure box and in it she carries her jewels, her money and as much more of her valuable property as it will contain.

Danish girls never receive diamond engagement rings. On their betrothal they are presented with a plain gold band, which is worn on the third finger of the left hand. On the wedding day the bridegroom removes that ring to the third finger of the right hand, which is the marriage finger in Denmark.

Persian women are among the most graceful, the most accomplished and the most intellectual of oriental females. In the upper class, however, the peculiar education of Persian girls tends to make them rather silly. They are handed over to a narrow-minded, ignorant molla badij, or governess, until they are ready for matrimony. On the other hand, the women of inferior social position enjoy considerably more freedom in Persia than even those of the west. They can work with their husbands and make their individuality and their influence felt. Marriages are conducted on the short or long term system, which is said to work extremely well. In Persia women vocalists and dancers are held in high estimation. Out of the ranks of the Persian female entertainers have stepped women who are famous, such as Mahmoubeh Abolda and Babae.

HER VALUE

The Quiet Woman Who Wouldn't Let the Movement Fail.

The ladies had gathered to sew for the new hospital, and the room buzzed with enthusiasm. Every one was laughing, chattering, hurrying and full of ardor—every one but little Miss Jenness, who worked slowly, painstakingly and placidly, exactly as she might have darned stockings at home.

"Do look at her!" whispered one lady to another. "She's positively exasperating, with her stolidity. Here we are on the verge of triumph after ten years' struggle, and she doesn't seem to care a bit. Is the woman incapable of enthusiasm, I'd like to know?"

"Yes," was the answer. "I think she is; it is a temperamental deficiency. To-day she doesn't show to advantage; it makes her seem aloof, almost alien. But five years ago, when the first wave of enthusiasm was spent, the first gifts had been all given, the first laborers were stepping aside and saying they had done their share—then she was of more value than all the rest of us."

"We had grown tired, discouraged, almost ashamed of our first high hopes; we had resigned ourselves to failure or half-success. But Miss Jenness simply paid no attention to the change. She had thought out the possibilities in the beginning, before she took up the work; she was as sure it was possible as she was that it was good, and she wouldn't let it fail. She's not gifted with natural leadership, either; not at all. But she simply wouldn't let the thing stop, wouldn't let it drop, wouldn't let it be forgotten."

"She did what she could, and went about wearing that same puzzled little smile at people's coldness that she wears to-day at their ardor; and gradually she led them, won them, shamed them back, till now the work is as good as done."

"She isn't in the usual way inspiring; she isn't responsive or emotional or imaginative. She is the kind of person who never gives even a pat of applause at a concert, and who shuts her windows tight when there's a celebration to keep out the cheers. But if you can't exhilarate her, you can't discourage her; she is impervious to the chill of reaction, the atmosphere of depression, the foreboding of failure. She never did anything more martial in her life than sew for fairs and collect charitable dues, I suppose; but all the same, there's something in little Miss Jenness that always makes me think of the '2 o'clock in the morning courage' that Napoleon prized."

"Enthusiasm is helpful, and it's fine; but it's fine, too, and it's rare, to be able to do without it."—Youth's Companion.

"LARN UP" THE SPOTTED STEER.

What an Ambitious Young Man Intended to Do at College.

A young man entered a college office, and, touching the president's arm, asked in a peculiar mountain brogue: "Be ye the man who sells larning?" Before the president could answer, he asked again: "Look here, mister, do you uns run this here thing?"

The president replied: "Yes, my man, when the thing is not running me. What can I do for you?"

"Heaps," was the only reply. Then, after a pause, he said: "I has lerna that you uns educate poor boys here, and, being as I am poor, thought I'd come and see if 'twas so. Do ye?"

The president replied that poor boys attended the college, but that it took money to provide for them, that they were expected to pay something. He was greatly troubled.

"Have you anything to pay for your food and lodging?"

His face brightened as he replied: "Yes, sir; I has a little spotted steer and, if you uns will let me, I'll stay wid you till I larn him up."—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

The Frills Did It.

Titles sometimes impress even the messengers who are in attendance at the doors of the secretaries of the various departments.

"Take my card to Mr. Root," said Representative Sulzer, walking up to the messenger on duty at the door of the Secretary of War.

"Sorry, sir, but the Secretary ain't seeing anyone to-day," answered the messenger, who had been turning a way Senators and Representatives all day.

"But I'm Representative Sulzer of New York."

"Can't take your card in, sir."

"You tell the Secretary Representative Sulzer of New York, the ranking member of the minority of the committee on military affairs of the House of Representatives, wants to see him."

The messenger was overpowered and stepped inside the room, and, returning, threw the door wide open, saying: "Walk right in, sir. The Secretary will see you."—New York World.

French Colonies Backward.

France spends annually for her colonies a little more than \$25,000,000, while the aggregate of its business with them, export and import, is but \$62,000,000, and but 4,000 a year emigrate to French colonies. But France has not been the least successful country in building a colonial empire, for Germany's geographically large possessions cost more than the aggregate of the exports and imports from them.

Hard Luck in Texas.

"Why are you crying, little boy?" asked the tourist in Texas.

"Boo-hoo!" sobbed the youngster, "de cyclone blew down every house in town but one."

"What one was that?"

"The schoolhouse."—Philadelphia Record.

Never demand that a busy man stop work to applaud you.

