

and she runs them off by the gross in the most heartless manner it is possible to conceive. A sewing-machine has been the utter ruin of many families. It is agonising to the head of a family to see the girls chuckle as they hear the click of the machinery running away with yard after yard of calico, as if calico didn't cost anything, and was to be picked up anywhere for nothing. Next to drink, I look upon sewing machines as the greatest social evil extant.

What I say is, teach girls something that is useful, at the same time ornamental, and, if the two can be combined, make it historical. Now there's CARPETS. What do girls know about carpets? I was going to put some chairs and a table in an empty room a few days ago, when an aged and well-matured female of my household said I must have a carpet. The room would look nothing without it. How could I invite people to sit on a chair where there was no carpet? The consequence was I walked into a shop, and told the man to send me a carpet to my address. He said, "What size is the room?" I said, "If you double my length and breadth and divide by two and a-half you will arrive within a few inches of the dimensions required." He shewed me many patterns to choose from, and I told him to choose the ugliest, as likely to be the most appreciated, and he chose it. The next day, I said to the woman of my household, "Why don't you use the carpet, that the chairs and table may go on the top of it?" She replied that it must be made first. I told her it was made when I bought the article. She said it must be sewed, but she wanted to take advice how it was to be managed. Then I went out into the street and brought in an aged woman, and asked her how it was to be managed? She asked for a piece of string, and then commenced measuring the distance between the funny bone of her left elbow and the after knuckle of her fore-finger. Then she measured the carpet, and said it must have another breadth. When I heard this, I went out over the way and brought another aged female. Without blushing in the least or shewing the slightest agitation, she began putting one foot before the other all round the skirting boards, when she said there was two yards and a foot and a half too much. Then I went round the corner and brought in another aged woman and asked her how it was to be managed? When she said, "What are you going to do about the selvage?" One of the aged women said, "turn it under," to which another merely said "rucks," but she didn't say it in anything like a charitable or humane spirit of mind. There was nothing evangelical about the manner the sentiment was given expression to. The women differed, and so I went out and brought in another. She said, "If the patterns are to meet you will want nine more yards." I asked, was it necessary for them to meet? when she put one arm over the other, and resting both against the upper gathers of her apron, she enquired why I had bought a carpet if the pattern was not to join? I said I would leave it all to them. This was 10 o'clock in the morning. I returned at 11 o'clock at night, and found the discussion going on as to how the carpet should be managed. Then I went to bed. Since the time referred to I believe the carpet has been "laid," but I have never had the courage to look.

#### HOW MY DOMESTIC, SUSAN, KINDLED A FIRE.

I PURSUE my observations, and proceed to embody them in my sentiments. The last few days have shewn me two things. One is that men require to be taught the art of putting out a fire, and women how to make one.

Look at that girl of mine, who came to me from the barracks. One of the Featherston selections. She had the certificates of two ministers as to her moral training, and I have every reason to believe that nothing could be finer than her knowledge of the catechism; and no girl could possibly shew a more complete or a more utter indifference than she did to her personal appearance. She was the most simple-minded creature I think I ever beheld. It is possible that she may have heard of a darning needle; but with respect to its application to the heel of a stocking, the thing had never crossed her mind. And I am quite sure that up to the time of her departure from my household, she never gave any one the opportunity of saying to her, *Honi soit qui malis pense*. My opinion is she had never in the course of her earthly career permitted herself to be placed in a position which would permit of such a compliment being paid her; poor simple-minded, innocent, unsophisticated Susan!

Well do I remember when she entered my service that I called her to me and told her that it was quite possible before I died I might require a cup of tea. The hour would be somewhere about seven in

the morning. Could she wake herself a little before that period, and could she light a fire? She said she was bad at the first, but was quite equal to the last. I agreed to hold myself responsible for the waking-up department. In fulfilment of my promise I commenced at the outside of the door about six o'clock the next morning, and in about three-quarters of an hour I effected a victory. I began with a few gentle raps with my knuckles. There was no response from within. I then tried the heel of a boot, afterwards a boot-jack. I wrenched at the handle of the door, first to the right, and then to the left, but still there was no response. Then I went outside and pelted the wall with stones and assailed it with axe-handles and things of hard substance. I struck that part of the wall nearest to where her head was located. Still there was no response. Then I played tunes on the window panes of her window with a door key and the tips of my fingers alternately. I made more knocks at the door, struck more blows at the back of her head from the outside, when within a little inside of three-quarters of an hour I had the satisfaction of discovering that I hadn't a corpse in my house.

My Susan said she would be out directly, and in a few seconds under an hour she fulfilled her promise. I think she had turned round and gone in for her second sleep.

Then I became interested in this girl, and I concealed myself in a place where I commanded a complete view of the kitchen, without being observed in return. I was anxious to learn how to light a fire, in case, at sometime or other under some peculiar exigency, I should be called upon to perform such an operation on my own account. I didn't want to humiliate myself to the extent of asking the girl how it was done, for fear it should make her proud and discontented with her station in life. I wanted to see her do it,—that was all, and I did see her do it.

Taking four logs of wood, she laid them solid as a bricklayer would lay bricks. Then she tore several leaves out of a boy's spelling book, which was convenient, and spread them with fresh butter taken from the bulk, intended for a week's consumption. She spread the butter after the manner of spreading it upon hot toast. Having accomplished this, she lifted one of the logs and put the slices of buttered paper in the cavity. Then she seized a match, and igniting it she lit the paper which she had made oleaginous, and a flame arose. Then she dropped the log over the flame, and added three more logs. After this she proceeded to comb her back hair. The flame came from between the crevices of the wood, but towards the end got sickly and showed an inclination to expire. Discovering this, my intelligent and intellectual girl, with great presence of mind, took half of a sperm candle from a bedroom candlestick, together with three parts of a box of matches, and these she distributed broadcast over the timber. There was a blaze of sufficient duration to enable her to complete her back hair and allow her to lace her boots to the extent of half way up on each foot. But the wood was of a damp and stubborn nature, and appeared to have a dread of fire. The girl, with a noble spirit of her own, renewed her efforts by wrapping up some pork dripping in a fragment of newspaper. There was a temporary blaze, but the fat melting immediately extinguished it. Then my Cinderella became melancholy and despondent, and she commenced to hook her dress in the front. After this she relapsed into deep meditation, when, as I surmised, she was seized with a happy thought. She went out into the yard, came in and piled on six more logs of wood, lit several matches which she placed where they could be made to retain holding ground. This appeared to afford her some, but perhaps not adequate, relief of mind, for noticing a kerosene tin, and finding by trial that there were contents in it, she eased her feelings by throwing a large per-centage upon the ignited matches. There was a sudden rush of sheet flame up the chimney. A dense smoke followed, and the fire was as though it had never been, so that not a spark remained to allow of even so much as a reminiscence. Then the girl finished the lacing of both boots and pulled up her socks and whatever other name socks may go by, and finished off by a feast on her finger nails.

I felt like a guilty being on witnessing the unsuccessful efforts of so worthy a

female. I became fowncast, and emerging from my concealment, I wandered through the purlieus of the city to pursue my reflections. I thought what a treasure that girl would be to her husband when she became his wife. So full of patience and long suffering. So fertile of resources, trying in rapid succession the effects of fresh butter, boxes of matches, sperm candles, pork dripping, more matches, more wood, more everything.

Still pursuing my meditations, I was winding my way homewards once again, when my attention was drawn to a stream of flame issuing from a chimney. It was the chimney attached to my own tenement. I hastened onwards, and entered. A fire that would have reduced pig-iron to cast steel in almost no time was consuming itself with intense heat at the expense of close upon half-a-ton of firewood. Steam was coming out of the spout of the kettle with sufficient force to have set a donkey-engine going. And where was Susan? She was reading the "wants" in the columns of a journal upon which I have the honour to serve. She said she didn't think my place would suit her. I said I was sorry indeed to hear her say so—that she suited me admirably, and that I thought if she made the acquaintance of any single man who dealt in firewood, he would marry her right off. I said, however, I had too much pride about me to keep her against her inclination. She could go at once. She went. Upon taking stock at her departure, I found all the fresh butter, all the kerosene, pork dripping, sperm candles, and matches had been consumed. I also missed two legs of a wooden bedstead which had been stowed away in the wash-house, and to this hour I am unable to account for their absence.

#### DIRECTIONS FOR PUTTING OUT A FIRE.

I have thought since whether Susan wouldn't have been a fair match for a volunteer fire brigade man I once lodged with. We slept in the same room. When the fire-bell rang out I used to wake him up. He would get me to go out and look in what direction the blaze was making itself known, while he took his uniform out of a box and carefully brushed it all over. Then he would oil his hair and part it down the middle; then he would polish his helmet and ask me how the fire was getting on. Then he would cut up tobacco and light his pipe and walk gently out of the room, and come back again and have a view at his own reflection in the looking-glass. All I know is that when the annual report was read by the captain of the brigade, that report stated that Volunteer Jones had never been absent once from the roll-call after a fire had been subdued; but it did not go on to state that Volunteer Jones had ever been at a fire. There are a good many Susans and Joneses in this world. People wonder how ever they manage to get on. But they do get on, and really what is the odds as long as one's happy.

#### I ECONOMISE AND ORDER A FIVE-GALLON KEG OF BEER.

It happened a fortnight back, and the events which then transpired are as fresh in my mind as if they had occurred since breakfast time in the morning on which I pen these remembrances. A jovial brewer meets me near to the enclosure of his establishment, when he says, "Mr Snyder, will you sample our last manufacture?" and I said I would. Then he conveyed me into a cool-cellar, and in connection with a half-pint crystal goblet I sampled the beer, and I pronounced it bright, clear, sparkling, crisp, pleasant of flavor, and possessing powers of imparting internal warmth in combination with solace of mind. I said all this upon the first trial, and gave the same opinion with variations at the second. The brewer said, "Try a five-gallon keg stationed in your own homestead." I said sixpenn'orth of beer fresh from an adjoining hotel answered all my purpose, and had answered the purpose rather better to the tight little woman who used to fetch it for me in a jug carefully concealed in a wicker basket, for her ways had been so captivating that the landlord had proposed to marry her. But the brewer declared I should never repent it if I tried a five-gallon keg. It would always, he said, be at my command at any hour of the day or night. I should feel a confidence in the undertaking. There would be an

independence of feeling in connection with the transaction. I would have the satisfaction of knowing it was all there when wanted. "You could look defiant, at the police, Mr Snyder, when Sunday came round. You might hold up a glass before his very nose, and ask him, wouldn't he like to know where you got it from. Besides," said the brewer, "look what a saving it is in point of economy." Then I said to that brewer, "Your powers are persuasive. Send me five gallons equal to sample." And it was so. When the cask came I desired the female of my household to draw me as much as would satisfy the thirst of a salt-fish breakfast; but she informed me it couldn't be done without a tap. Then I said, "Get a tap;" and she got one in something over two hours. It amounted to three-and-sixpence. I called in a friend to advise me how the tap should be inserted, and he said, pointing to a hole near the bottom of the cask with a cork in it, "Take the tap and place it against the cork, then take the hammer and knock at the tap." I did this while my friend and the female of the household looked on interested. The tap went in without much effort on the part of the hammer, but it was followed with a gush of beer which distributed itself in about the most impartial manner it is possible to conceive over my shirt-front, over my friend's face, and the face and neck-frill of the female of the household. Some portion went on to the wall, and another portion landed itself on the carpet. I said we would take our revenge out of that beer to the extent of three tumblers, and I told all hands to stand by for a gush, as I was about to turn on the tap. But when I turned it on, after leaking out the matter of two wine-glasses, it caved in, and refused a further supply. I said, "What does this mystery mean? Can it be that the beer is so weak that it is deficient in strength to run?" And I went out and asked a neighbour to explain. He looked for the matter of five minutes, and then told me I must spoil the cask. I said I should like to spoil the inside to the extent of about a pint of the beer; but I didn't want to do any malicious injury to the cask. The neighbour said I misunderstood him: the cask must have a *spile* hole to let in the air. I asked him how that was to be done, and he said I must get a gimblet. I said I hadn't got one. He said I could get one for ninepence. So I sent out the woman of my household, and she brought back a patent one which she stated came to sixpence. This brought the cost of getting at three glasses of beer to four-and-fourpence. For the first go off I think I never saw so much froth in connection with so little beer in any part of the world I have travelled under or over. The foam rose above the tumbler and formed a cauliflower of huge size and elegant proportions, while not more than half-an-inch of the amber liquid remained on deposit in the glass. But with a succession of efforts we did get the beer, and I felt proud to think what things patience and perseverance will accomplish in this sublunary sphere. All through that day I experimented on the tap to ascertain whether it fulfilled the expectations which I had formed of it, and found them more than realised. I tried that tap the last thing before turning in at night, and went to bed comforted. I said, "I owe a debt of gratitude to that brewer altogether independently of owing him for the beer. If I should miss coming up to time in the latter I certainly should not as concerning the former." Then I fell into a sweet slumber, from which I was aroused soon after daybreak by a gentle rapping at my door. I said, "Come in," when the female of my household entered, and in a sort of a satirical vein asked me whether I knew where the beer was. I said, "Susan, the beer, except the two gallons consumed yesterday, is in the cask, and I don't mind now I come to think of it, if you do bring me in a glass with not to much froth on it." "Sir," said the woman of my household, "the beer has departed from the cask and is playing about the floor."

Either the strength of the beer had forced its way through the tap, or I had upon my last application omitted to shut it off. I arose with feelings more easily conceived than described, and there I beheld with a saddened gaze the liquid spreading itself under the influence of a gentle breeze coming through the kitchen door with a beautiful evenness over the floor. It sought our crevices and trickled down them. It made for a knot-hole in one of the flooring boards, and went