

## 17. Woman's Sphere.

By One of the Sex.

### The Food We Eat.

The chief article of a mid-winter dinner is usually meat prepared in some way. Therefore we will devote some few papers to the various ways of cooking meat. Steak is used occasionally, especially if no meat is used at breakfast, the one meal in the latter part of the day being the only one at which this heavy article of diet should be served. To properly fry meat it should never be fried at all. That is to say, meat loses its flavor as well as its digestibility if it is put on the fire in a pan of grease and cooked until grease and meat are both tasteless and useless. If you have no meat boiler, cut your meat into suitable pieces, and be sure and separate a thick end of steak from the thinner portions, as the thin will be done long before the other is cooked through. Put on your frying pan, and let it get smoke hot. Drop a tiny piece of butter in it, to prevent sticking, and then put in the meat, not overcrowding it. In a moment it will be ready to turn; indeed it must be turned every few seconds. That is the secret of keeping the juice in the meat. Don't let the heat of your fire wane, for if it gets low the meat will simmer and all the rich juice will run out. Never salt the steak, but after it has been turned and turned until it is done to your taste (I like it left a little rare), then take it up on a hot plate, and salt and pepper it. Also put a generous lump of butter on each piece, and send it at once to the table. If you ever taste properly cooked meat, such as I have described, you will never want to eat the hard, juiceless meat which was put on at the same time the potatoes were put in the pot and then left to its own fate on the back of the stove, while the cook goes calmly away about other less important business. If you wish to broil steak, be sure and observe the same rule I have here given; turn it frequently, and be sure your fire does not go down and thus leave it to simmer. If you are going to cook mutton chops, you can serve them in the same way. Once in a great while you may want some veal cutlets, and if you do, you ought to give them a longer time and a somewhat slower cooking. One delicious way to cook veal cutlets is to pour boiling water over them in the frying pan and let them boil about a quarter of an hour. The water by that time should have all boiled out. Now, put into them a generous lump of butter, that is when they are perfectly dry from the water, then cook them slower than the steak until they are a delicate brown. Salt and pepper them just before taking them from the fire. Mutton chops are very nice if cooked in this way. In buying steak, remember that the porterhouse, although the cheapest cut, has only one good bit, and that is the tenderloin. The sirloin is better, and there are some people who aver that a steak cut off the shoulder is the richest flavored and best cut in the whole beef. Some people chop or pound before cooking the meat, and if it is tough and old that will certainly make it more

palatable. French cooks soak a tough piece of meat in vinegar for an hour, and then wash it in cold water. This makes it tender. The old fashioned way of flouring the steak and dropping it into boiling fat makes the steak taste good, but the thick coating of grease and flour make it hard to digest.

### The Clothes We Wear.

THE DREADED CRINOLINE.

The press of the country is full of allusions, funny and otherwise, to this expected onslaught of dressmakers and fashion leaders. A London firm which has an agent in New York sent one of its paid agents down Broadway several days since, arrayed in all the glory of the hoop skirt. It was early in the morning, however, and therefore none but the busy man, the artisan and the nursery maids saw the wonderful sight. Whether the lady was too shy or too wise to face the Broadway of fashionable New York in the latter part of the day no one seems to know. However it was, she made a whole street full of people leave their customary ways and walks to gaze at the absurd figure she cut. It seems that the greatest desire to introduce this new fad comes from the English, and it is there, too, that the strongest effort is being made to fight against it. A few days ago a skirt cut on the latest bias form, with some wire in the edge of the facing, was sent to the Princess of Wales by her dressmaker for approval. She at once declared she would have nothing to do with the absurdity, and ordered herspring wardrobe to be made in the usual narrow, graceful style, rejecting in toto all the newest sleeves and skirt fancies. There are a number of societies being formed in this country to wage war against the crinoline, and even the legislatures of two states have consented to take the matter up, and pass laws against the selling and wearing of crinolines.

In San Francisco a reporter on the *Examiner*, that daring Western paper, dressed herself in a tilting hoopskirt, and with other new and dashing articles of wearing apparel she sauntered forth upon the streets to note carefully the effect of this swallow, and to see if it would bring the summer of the hoop skirt. As in New York, the effect was somewhat trying to the nervous system of the wearer, for every one on the street stopped to gaze at the figure with open eyes and mouth. The young lady says that the attempt to keep the thing from tilting and teetering was enough to weary anyone, but she fulfilled her duty, and wrote up the liveliest sort of a description of her adventures.

Sleeves are a very prominent part of a woman's attire, and instead of being raised so high on the shoulder as they have been, the fullness is allowed to drop down on the middle of the upper arm, giving the effect of an enormous width of shoulders, which is farther accentuated by full bertha or lace. Party dresses are cut straight across the neck, adding to this wide and anything but pretty effect. We may look to see the ordinary street dress retain much of its plain and quiet fashion, leaving the odd and strange for the drawing room and the house. There is just one bright spot in all this disagreeable prospect in store for fashion-

able woman, and that is the shortness of the skirts, all of them being from one to three inches from the ground, and therefore showing off the ugly as well as the pretty foot to its greatest advantage or disadvantage, as the case may be. However, we who care to be neither the head nor the foot in this line of fashion are grateful enough that we can make our dress skirts three inches from the ground and know that we are in the fashion.

### Our Children.

THE INFANT.

I promised to tell you last week about my idea in regard to turning the infant over in the course of a long sleep. I remembered that this nurse who was so particular as to this one thing always put a child down on its side. I asked her why she did so, and was informed that it was dangerous to let a child sleep on its back, as it was apt to vomit and thereby choke itself. "Aha," said I, "well, but if the babe is raised on proper and hygienic principles and never vomits!" However, so fixed is the idea in my good nurse's mind that nothing will remove it. Now I proceed to ask myself, why should a baby sleep on its side, or why should we as to that? No special reason, unless the baby or the grown person has a very weak stomach, and it is necessary to turn on the right side to allow the stomach some room for its gaseous contents. I noticed my own little children they were far more apt to sleep on their stomach than on their side. Indeed I rarely found them on either side, but generally on the back. I tried the plan myself, and found that I was more comfortable, after some trial, to sleep on my back. So I tried putting the next baby down in the same natural way, and he too seemed to prefer it, very soon turning over after he was a little older, if he had been put down on one side or the other. So since then all my little ones have slept without the least danger or discomfort, lying flat upon their back until they were old enough and strong enough to turn about as they pleased. Thus I have been able to leave them undisturbed—the point I have wished to make in this matter. No baby should be taken up to be washed, or to be shown to company, or indeed for anything until it awakens of its own accord, being left to sleep and rest just as long as it will. That is the first important lesson to learn. Never disturb, nor even move a baby, until at least it has established regular habits, and no one can tell how easily, unless they carefully watch this thing for themselves.

BABY'S DIET.

The next and I might almost say, the most important thing to be considered in connection with a baby is when shall it nurse? Oh, if mothers could only know what slaves they make of themselves and what disagreeable tyrants they make of their beloved babies, and too, if mothers could be made to realize how many, very many, valuable hours are wasted in the nursing and tending of babies, it seems to me that they would try and reform in this particular. Why do I say that time which is usually devoted to nursing and carrying a baby is wasted? I could enumerate a dozen good and sufficient reasons. First, the question