

THE intimate lives of the great have ever been the subject of song and drama, and it was inevitable that such a beautiful love story as that of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning should become material for literature. Browning was attracted first by the magic spell of the invalid's poetry, and later the whole chivalrous nature of the man was roused at thought of the gloomy background in which that poetry flowered. His ardent and tempestuous wooing did more for Elizabeth Barrett than all the skill of her doctors, and to her subsequent happiness and reviving interest in life we owe many of her finest poems. The dramatist Rudolf Besier has made the most of his material in "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," and the play was produced for the first time at a matinee during the Malvern Festival. The tender charm and beauty of the story form its chief appeal, but dramatic moments are not wanting, and the play seems assured of a successful run.

WHERE space is limited as it is in most beach huts a good plan is to have folding tables and chairs, so that they can be stored flat against the wall when not in use. The new synthetic china is ideal where there are children, as it is unbreakable, and can be bought in pretty colourings. A couple of extendable clothes-hangers, made to fold flat against the wall when not required, will be found most useful for extra wet-weather coats. And this good idea, for drying bathing suits and towels, is a clothes-horse with several arms—which also rests flat against the wall if necessary.

A SPECIALLY-DEvised cradle float has been adopted by Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, London. This is used for badly-paralysed children who are otherwise debarred from the pleasure of enjoying a real sea bath. It has also been proved that frequently absolutely helpless cripples have been able to get some use from their defective limbs when in the water.

ALL who have read J. B. Priestley's "The Good Companions" will be interested to know that the author has just dramatised it, thus making his debut as a playwright. An operetta version is probably being made also.

A DOMESTIC electric egg-beater is absolutely unbeatable. It's great! In appearance, the whisk part is just like the manual one, but there is a small flat form on the top. On this sits a neat little motor with hand rheostat control. The back portion is securely fixed on a stand, and all one has to do is to place the basin with eggs, cream or cake mixture underneath, turn on the switch, and leave it to do its work while your attention can be diverted to other duties. It is invaluable on farms or in large families, and as it is inexpensive it is by no means beyond the purse of every housewife who has to do her own cooking.

A FRIEND has just installed a very cheap and efficient gas calliphont and it is proving equally as good as the large, expensive ones. It costs only £4/15/-, is nickel-plated, and its chief charm is a quick flow of water,



not a trickle, for its heating capacity is very great. There is also another on the market which is cheaper still, and this can be placed over the bath with an extending tap over the basin. When building, it is well worth considering.

WHEN brick houses are first built it is advisable not to paper on the top of the plaster for a year. Unfortunately, white is a trying colour for a room, especially when the electric light is on; therefore, it is an excellent idea to paint the plaster any desired colour with a good flat paint. I was recently in a home where this had been done and it was most effective, and although it had been painted, for six years, it hadn't a single mark of dirt, for if it becomes marked it can be cleaned with soap and water.

## Thought For The Week.

We receive, each one of us, the Magic Bean, and if we plant it, it will undoubtedly grow and become our ladder to the stars and the cloud castles.

Arthur Machen in "Far Off Things."

AN idea was suggested to me yesterday when I was converting a kitchen into a dining-room. Instead of scrimming and papering the wooden walls, use beaver boarding with batons. Not only is it more satisfactory, but it thoroughly changes the impression of its ever having been a kitchen.

I HEARD two women debating the possibility of an ideal dining-room being made out of a room only 9 x 8; and whether six people could be comfortably seated. It is possible, and it has been done and used in a very charming home. All the equipment is built in, even to the pedestal dining table, which is fixed to the floor. This is oval in shape, and a semi-circular seat, which seats six people comfortably, is likewise built in. This seat is built up against one wall and part of two other walls; and the free end of the oval table is cut straight, and a chair is placed there and from that end all the serving is done. The sideboard is built in and has four capacious cupboards, and above is a large mirror which not only improves the lighting but also gives the illusion of spaciousness. The lighting is evenly distributed by opaque glass fittings at the four corners of the room with opal lamps. This gives the room a most cheerful and agreeable effect.

CHANDELIERS are the only central lighting fittings that look well in a period room, and even then the light they throw upon the room

strikes too harsh a note. There is no doubt that the most satisfactory form of lighting to use in any kind of room is concealed lighting or wall brackets with several reading and standard lamps placed about the room. You will find, too, that this means of lighting tends to bring out the warmth and colour of old woods, while the central lighting killed all the soft tones.

MISS JULIA CHATTERTON, the song composer, makes a hobby of collecting old folk-songs, and in the last eight years she has gathered over one thousand from all over the world. She has just returned from a trip to the Balkans, bringing with her fifty new additions to her collection, as well as some quaint home-made

instruments used by the peasants. She is planning an anthology of the folk-songs of the world and intends to visit China, Japan, India and East Africa in the near future.

AT the chocolate and confectionery exhibition held at Olympia, London, last month an official in charge of the stand of prominent manufacturers told a reporter that more sweets and chocolates are being eaten at present than at any time during the past ten years. "Three or four years ago," he said, "the chocolate industry experienced its zero hour. It was due mainly to the drastic diets which women were adopting to acquire the boyishly slim figure then the fashion. Now the pendulum has swung the other way. The ultra-slim figure is no longer the prevailing mode, and chocolates are more popular than ever."

WHEN dyeing faded curtains it is a good plan to bleach them first, otherwise they will take the dye unevenly. If you are doing several pairs it is best to put each pair in a separate bath, in which the dye is of the same strength. If there is only one dye bath, prepared the first pair of curtains will absorb most of the dye, and the subsequent ones will be of a paler hue than the rest.

NOW that Christmas is within sight housewives will be turning their thoughts to fare appropriate to the season. The following recipe for

mincemeat may be found useful:—Ingredients: 1lb. each of apples, suet, large raisins, sultanas, currants and sugar; ½lb. peel, 2oz. almonds, 2 small lemons, half a nutmeg (grated), ¼ tea-spoonful mixed spice, quarter pint of brandy or whisky. Put into a large basin the apples (peeled, cored and sliced), the suet (free from skin and roughly cut), the raisins (stoned and cleaned), the currants (cleaned), thickly sliced peel, blanched almonds, and sugar. Mix all together and put in spoonfuls through a mincing machine. Return to the bowl and add the grated rind and juice of the lemons, the nutmeg, spice and brandy or whisky. Stir very thoroughly before putting into clean dry jars and tie up.

DESIROUS of supporting all efforts to introduce a new spirit into industry (says the "Alliance Record") an employer called his men together to place before them his plans for bettering working conditions. "Now, whenever I enter the workshop," he said, "I want to see every man cheerfully performing his task; and therefore I invite you to place in this box any suggestions as to how that can be brought about." A few days later he opened the box and took out a slip of paper on which was written: "Take the rubbers off your shoes!"

DON'T you dislike the look of egg-stains on your egg-spoons? By chance the other day I found that when the spoons are washed if one rubs a little salt on the egg-stain it is removed at once and the salt does not even scratch the spoon.

LATELY we have been buying shelled walnuts, because of the difficulty of excavating the nuts, but they are never so fresh as the ones taken directly from the shell. However, we have now been told to pour boiling water over the nuts and let them stand until cold; then crack the end of the shell with a hammer, and the nuts will come out whole.

BRASS plates and all brassware can be cleaned easily if one has no brass polish by rubbing on a little whiting and then squeezing a lemon on this, and the use the lemon as a sponge on the ware.

HAVE you ever tried putting brown paper or blotting paper under material when using benzine to remove grease stains? This is an excellent idea, as the pad underneath helps to absorb the grease. But, be careful to saturate your material round the stem, and work inwards, otherwise you are apt to leave a water mark.

THE tennis season is here, and one of the chief trials a girl must undergo is sunburn. To avoid it try washing your face in milk, and let it dry on. You'll find it a little uncomfortable for a few minutes, but it is absolutely infallible.

IF your skin and colour are not what you would choose, and if your hair looks lank and mousey in colour, try the effect of a violet ray apparatus every day. There are different electrodes, and a special comb electrode for the hair. The chief virtue of violet ray is that it stimulates circulation, thus nourishing the tissues and cells, and after a short time of using it a woman will