

THE HOUSEHOLD.

A BIT OF WORLDLY CHEER.

'Going to church, mother?'

'No, my son; I don't think I'll go out to-day.'

'You don't go out much lately, do you?'

'Well, no, I don't. There's a good deal of rheumatism in my limbs, and I think, perhaps, I'm full as well off in the house.'

'Mother does not seem to have much ambition as to going out,' Mr. Baxter said to his wife, as they started on their walk to church. 'I rather hate to feel she is breaking up.'

'Well, I do, too,' said Mrs. Baxter; 'but when old people begin to lose ambition they soon lose strength with it.'

Mr. Baxter said no more, nor did his wife, yet there was a serious expression on the man's face, and Mrs. Baxter did not feel quite satisfied. She had been a good woman, and a kind, considerate mother-in-law, this rheumatic mother, of whom they had just spoken. When Mrs. Baxter began housekeeping, it was in the house belonging to her husband's mother. Gradually it had come into her husband's hands, as the mother could pay neither taxes nor the other constantly occurring expenses of keeping a house in proper condition. A home the old lady always would have, and it was meant she should have all needed kindly consideration beside.

The sermon that morning had a text which the minister said might be found either in Genesis xviii., 5, or in Colossians iv., 8: 'Comfort ye your hearts; and comfort your hearts.' Then he went on to say that he believed it a stern Christian duty to comfort hearts in this world, both our own and others'. And the necessity of receiving comfort to the very end of life, in things both spiritual and temporal, was conclusively shown.

On the way home from church Mr. Baxter said to his wife: 'You know, wife, I very seldom make remarks on anyone's garb, especially after coming from church, but did not old Mrs. Prince look terribly shabby about the bonnet, somehow?'

Mrs. Baxter burst into several little ripples of laughter. 'Yes,' she said. 'The fact is the old lady begins her fourth year's wear of the same winter bonnet, donning it in the fall.'

Mr. Baxter was swishing fallen leaves aside with his cane as he walked. 'I should think Prince would be ashamed to let his fine-looking old mother go looking like that,' he said. 'And see the spikes and flower beds his girls were sporting on their heads!'

'Well, perhaps the old lady does not care,' said Mrs. Baxter, 'but she certainly did look "terribly shabby about the head!" and her voice still betrayed her amusement. All at once she sobered completely. During the sermon she had asked herself with genuinely kindly concern what she could do to comfort that old mother of her household who had not seemed very bright of late. Now it suddenly flashed into her mind that in the hurry and work of preparing herself and her two young daughters for the fall and winter, she had given never a thought to the always modest apparel of 'Mother Baxter.' Was it at all likely the old lady had shrunk from making her appearance in year before last's fall bonnet, and didn't like to say anything? Yes, come to think of it, she had been so ailing all the previous winter she had scarcely attended church once, so a fresh bonnet was not needed. But now Mrs. Baxter resolved on the instant what her week's work should consist of chiefly. Mother Baxter had helped her in a thousand little nameless ways when she needed it sorely, she should not lack for a little worldly comfort now.

'Grandma,' she said cheerily on Monday, 'now this week comes your time for being fixed up. It's a little late, but your bonnet is to be made entirely over, with a fresh flower and new strings, and your cloak is to be remodeled.'

'Don't worry about me, child,' said the old lady, with a perceptibly brightening countenance. 'I may not be able to go out all winter long.'

'That doesn't make any difference, grandma, you're going to be "all in order" to go whenever you can. Such a church lover as you've been all your days mustn't give up as long as you can possibly make the effort, and there's John's strong arm to lean on, you know. He spoke last Sunday of his reluctance to see you beginning to stay at home. On pleasant days a walk might help you.'

The next Sunday at church time Mother Baxter was the first one ready to start.

'That's something like mother!' said her son, heartily, on seeing her.

'Well, there was such a good, comforting effort to spur me up,' she said, with a contented smile, 'I thought I'd make an effort, too, and it does seem pleasant to be on the road to church of a Sunday.'

One day when something was said of 'old lady Prince,' Mother Baxter shook her head and said mournfully: 'I'm afraid they don't appreciate her as they should; she's been a faithful, industrious woman in her day.'

'A little worldly cheer goes a good ways with old people,' Mrs. Baxter said to her husband afterward.

'It goes a good ways with us all, wife,' he replied.

'Yes, but the old need comforting in a spontaneous way. They are sensitive and generally uncomplaining. Some have more pride than others, but I believe to the very end of even a long life a little worldly cheer brings great comfort to the old.'

'Think naught a trifle, though it small appear;

Small sands the mountain, moments make the year,

And trifles, life.'

—'Christian Work.'

SCIENTIFIC DISH-WASHING.

Many housekeepers spend half a lifetime at the work before they learn that there is an easy, scientific, mechanical and cleanly way to wash dishes. It is not an uncommon thing, if one can get a peep into the average kitchen during this operation, to see a pan of water, not very warm, but very greasy, with particles of food floating on the top of it, and a pile of dishes covered with bits and scraps standing ready for a bath in this not very inviting liquid.

The scientific dish-washer either scrapes off or rinses off all loose particles from her dishes before she puts them into the water. She begins with the larger plates, putting them into the pan first, then adding them by sizes until the pan is full. Cups and other articles are placed around, then over all is poured hot soapsuds, not boiling hot, but quite as warm as the hands can be put into comfortably. The cups and saucers are, of course, the cleanest things. These are washed first, and by the time she has reached the plates that may be greasy, they are warmed through and are cleaned with much more ease than as though they were suddenly put into the water and washed off. At this stage it is a good plan to put into the water, in addition to soap, a teaspoonful of washing soda, which should be kept in a convenient vessel over the sink. It takes scarcely more than half of the time to wash dishes in this way.

One good housekeeper has a dish-pan almost double the usual size. In it every dish is put—silver and all—then the hot water is poured on, a large quantity being used, and this is really an economy in time and strength, provided water is plenty. As for greasy dish-water, good housekeepers should never have it. An abundance of hot water, good soap, a little soda and dishes properly scraped off before beginning are all that is required. Dish-cloths are among the neglected items in kitchen economy. As a rule, it takes a good deal of nerve to touch the average dish-cloth. It should be one of the first lessons taught to the young

housekeeper, that her dish-cloths should be immaculate. 'I never hang my dish-cloths up until they are so clean that I could use them as napkins, were it necessary,' was the instruction of a noted teacher of household science. 'It pays to take time to put the dish-pan, kitchen sink and cooking utensils in excellent order. If sense and soda are used, but little additional time is required, and the satisfaction of it is ample compensation.—New York 'Ledger.'

THE 'WORST BOY.'

I have known a boy who was called 'the worst boy' in a schoolroom of fifty boys. This teacher was called 'the best teacher in town.' She was forty years old, and he was thirteen. Her manner was haughty, so was his. She would have her own way if a will had to be broken to pieces; so would he. When he was only three years old he committed a digression for which his mother asked him to say he was sorry. 'But I am not sorry,' he said. 'Then I will whip you till you are sorry,' she exclaimed, and forthwith proceeded to apply the rattan to the boy.

Howls and yells followed, the mother resting once in a while to ask—'Will you say you are sorry?' 'You can beat me because you are biggest, but I'll never be sorry,' he answered. She went on whipping. Resting again, she demanded—'Will you say you are sorry?' 'You can kill me, but I'll never say I'm sorry,' he exclaimed, with fury-flashing eye and trembling body. That mother put by the rattan. She was defeated, and ever after he controlled her. She was not wise enough to turn that strong will in another direction instead of opposing it. His teacher was not wise enough to turn his will in the right direction either. Such scenes occurred in the schoolroom between the two! Disgraceful, heartrending. At last he was expelled from school. His father went to the school committee to intercede for the boy. On the board was a lady. She was touched by the father's appeal, and she influenced the rest of the committee to allow him to return to school.

She sat in an anteroom and watched the teacher and the boy that day, without the boy knowing he was watched. She saw the boy 'get through his arithmetic study' long before the rest. Then she saw him 'hitch' in his chair. 'Stay in at recess for restlessness,' observed Miss Strong, the teacher. The lady of the school committee saw the boy take up a book and read. His mouth twitched his features were convulsed with nervous spasms. 'Stay in after school to-night for making faces,' commanded Miss Strong, the teacher.

Then the lady of the school committee walked into the schoolroom, and asked the boy to go into the next room with a sealed note to the teacher. The note read—'Set this boy a hard example in arithmetic, and tell him to come back and do it. A. B., of the School Committee.'

No one was more surprised than Miss Strong when the school board promoted 'her worst boy' into a room two grades above her own the next week. Then he did admirably, and now he is one of the 'brightest business men in Boston.'

Nervous children need long recesses, varied exercises, a bright, cheerful teacher, who has not too much of the Napoleon about her, and one who is willing to live and let live if you only give her half a chance!—Lucy Agnes Hayes, Philadelphia.

CHILDREN'S FOOD.

A great mistake with too many mothers is in allowing their little ones to eat between meals. Children who are in the habit of eating whenever and wherever they please seldom eat a good meal at the table. If the hours are too long between meals let there be one simple lunch of fresh fruit, bread and butter, or bread and milk, or graham crackers in the middle of the forenoon, and again in the middle of the afternoon; but there

let it end. This continual eating from morning till night is ruinous to any one's digestion. Then there is nothing more unsightly than to see a house full of children running upstairs and downstairs eating bread and molasses and daubing themselves and every one else with it.

Children who are brought up with cultured, well bred people soon learn to be polite and eat nicely at the table. I have known children who were allowed to eat any way when the family were alone, and who when company came were so dazed and stupid as to embarrass the mother exceedingly.

Below are given some simple recipes which are wholesome and appetizing for the little folks:

Oatmeal Rolls.—To a pint of cold oatmeal mush left from breakfast add a pint of hot milk, one tablespoonful of melted butter, one egg, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, and flour to make moderately stiff, so that it can be dropped from a spoon. Bake in hot gem irons.

Steamed Rice.—This is a very nice dish when steamed until every kernel stands out. Serve with cream and sugar, or with a boiled custard if preferred.

Graham Bread.—Dissolve one-fourth yeast cake in one-fourth cupful of warm water, or, if preferred, one-third cupful of soft yeast can be used instead. Scald one cupful of milk, and when cool add the yeast, a tablespoonful of molasses, one-quarter teaspoonful of salt and half a cupful of white flour; beat together thoroughly, and thicken with sifted graham flour to make a good batter. Cover and set in a warm place. When light, stir in more graham flour to make it stiff, pour it into a tin and let it rise half an hour. Bake about an hour.

Stewed Celery is very nutritious and appetizing. Wash thoroughly and cut in small pieces about as string beans are cut, stew in cold water until very tender and the water cooks out, season with butter, salt and cream. A delicious stew can be made from odds and ends of cold beef, or lamb cut in small pieces and allowed to simmer for an hour, then add a few stalks of celery cut fine, and just before taking from the stove, some cold stock or gravy. Serve on slices of crisp toast with baked potatoes.

Beef, Veal or Lamb Scallops.—Place in a pudding dish a layer of chopped meat with bits of butter over it, then a layer of bread crumbs and another of meat. Alternate until the dish is full. Pour over the top a bowl of gravy, or if you haven't that, milk will answer, with a beaten egg on top.—New York 'Observer.'

CORN.

According to a writer in 'Good Housekeeping' the best way in which cornmeal breads can be eaten, as a class, is hot from the oven to the table. No visions of dyspepsia, or of dread micro-organisms, thirsting for the life of the epicure, need be feared in this case. The hot soda biscuit may be an enemy of the most relentless type, toothsome as it is to average appetites; stale bread, according to scientists, may be loaded with disease germs; but the cornmeal muffin, smoking hot, is most decidedly appetizing, while it is absolutely harmless. The following recipes are appended to this assurance:

Cream of Corn.—Pound in a mortar the contents of two medium-sized cans of corn, add a pint of well-seasoned soup stock, and a quart of rich cream sauce. Mix well, rub through a sieve, and add two ounces of butter, when it is ready to serve. The yolks of four or five eggs will give a bright yellow color.

Corned Chicken Soup.—Cut a tender fowl in small pieces, dress with butter, cover with two gallons of well-seasoned white stock, and let it simmer slowly till the meat is tender. Add a can of corn, boil for five minutes, and serve. Chopped onions or parsley may be used as a relish, according to taste.