

## The Household.

### Special Baths.

A few words on special baths and their uses, would not seem uncalled for just at this time. First, the sponge bath, the form of bathing where the water is applied to the surface through the medium of cloth or sponge, no part of the body being plunged in the water. The practice of systematic, daily sponge-bathing is one giving untold benefits to the follower. Let a person, not over-strong, subject to frequent colds from the slightest exposure, the victim of chronic catarrh, sore throat, etc., begin the practice of taking a sponge bath every morning, commencing with tepid water in a warm room (not hot), and following the sponging with friction that will produce a warm glow over the skin, and then take a five-minutes' brisk walk in the open air. See if you do not return with a good appetite for breakfast. After having used tepid water for a few mornings, lower the temperature of the bath until cold water can be borne with impunity. The daily cold sponging of a sensitive throat or lungs will often result most satisfactorily if persistently and conscientiously followed. The cold, ante-breakfast sponge bath should, however, be avoided by the weak person and the ones whose lungs are already diseased, as the reaction following might not be strong enough to prevent colds which might hasten fatal results. Another use of the cold bath is to induce sleep by calling the blood to the surface; the congested brain is relieved and sleep comes in consequence. It is on this principle that the winding of the leg in a cold wet cloth proves so efficacious in provoking sleep.

There is still another use of the sponge bath that must not be passed over; it is the bath par excellence for the invalid, and by the addition of rock salt or of alcohol it is made stimulating and at the same time soothing. It is the only form of bath that can be given the fever-stricken patient, by the layman, and when soda or rum has been added, care being taken to squeeze the sponge quite dry, to prevent wetting clothing, no evil results can follow, except in the exanthemata. Hot baths—102°-110°—are invaluable in cases where an immediate reaction is necessary, as in croup and convulsions. They cause relaxation of cutaneous capillaries, relieving nerve centers. When a child is taken in convulsions, it should be quickly stripped of clothing and plunged (all but the face) in the hot bath. Five or ten minutes will suffice to relieve the spasm, when the child may be taken out and rolled up in hot blankets. For croup a longer time may be necessary, and it is well to put a wet cloth on the child's head.—[Amelia A. Whitfield, M. D., in Good Housekeeping.

### Trifles.

A noted man once said, "Attention to trifles makes perfection, and perfection is no trifle." How many there are who excuse their little faults, extravagances and neglect of duties, thinking and saying they are but trifles. They do not stop to think the whole world is made of trifles.

What make or mar the happiness of our lives? Answer, Trifles. And yet we call them little things. To treat little things with contempt is no mark of a superior mind. I think

it quite the other way, and they who indulge in it will grow worse instead of better. It may seem to you but a trifle that you have not answered the last letter from an absent relative or friend, and I am sure you might have written a letter the receiver would have thought no trifle. And if we neglect our friends, they will neglect us sooner or later.

There are many who are always making promises, and just as constantly breaking them, probably thinking they are but trifles. I think this one of the worst kinds of trifling. I never can think it a small thing to break a promise; it seems to me it is something sacred. I think it of great importance that parents should keep their promises to their children, and also impress upon them that promises are to be kept.

Dexter Smith says of trifles:

"Some kindly act performed, or gentle word,  
Will oft cement a friendship once begun,  
As mighty rivers feel their heart-strings stirred  
By little streams that down the hill-sides run."

### Breakfast, Dinner, and Tea.

What do I want for breakfast, dear?  
My wants are all in my mind quite clear:  
You—with your cheerful morning smile,  
And a pretty dress, my thoughts to beguile  
Into thinking of flowers; an earnest word  
That will all through my busy day be heard,  
And make me sure that my morning light  
Beams strongly true, e'en while dancing bright,  
Be certain to give me these, all these,  
And anything else you can or please.  
But dinner—what will I have for that?  
Well, dear, when I enter, doff my hat,  
And turn to the table, I want to see you,  
Standing, just as you always do,  
To make me lose all the forenoon's fret,  
And cheer for the afternoon's work to get;  
Tell me all your news, and I'll tell mine,  
And with love and joy and peace we'll dine.  
Be certain to give me these, all these,  
And anything else that you can or please.  
And what for tea? Have I any choice?  
Yes, dear, the sound of your own sweet voice,  
And your gentle presence. I always feel  
The cares of the day, like shadows, steal  
Away from your soul light; and evening rest  
Come just in the way I love the best.  
So, when you place your twilight tea,  
With a special thought in your heart for me,  
Be certain to give me these, all these,  
And anything else that you can or please.  
—Junia Stafford, in Good Housekeeping.

### What Shall the Children Read?

This is a question that every mother should decide herself, and judge whether it is good or bad before the child reads the first line. Don't say you've not time—take the time to read a large share of the book, or glance over the paper before it is laid on the table for public use. A quick, intelligent eye, and a mother's eye, also, will do wonders in a turning over of leaves, reading here and there a few words, seeing if the language is pure, the style graceful, the moral healthful. Much of harm is done to the young people by their reading sensational stories of the "blat and thunder" style, smuggled in and read secretly or in some cases openly, in illustrated weeklies. It has caused many boys to rob and fly from their homes, seeking for "worlds to conquer," "bringing up" in a police station and returned home.

Much of the blame is to be traced to the mother—too much indulgence from a mother has ruined more families than a father's harshness—bad books and bad companions being easy stepping-stones to wickedness. A good mother will do a great deal towards forming her children's character. The first few years they are wholly under her influence, and she is all to them; then the school-life begins, and teacher and school-mates broaden the view; but the mother must not relinquish her watchfulness,

but interest herself in their studies, plays, companions, and make herself necessary to their happiness. Keep hold of the children; don't let them grow away from you. A mother should never grow old to her sons and daughters; be one of them and gain their confidence; be their companion, even if you lose the acquaintance of some of your own age. Better make good men and women of your children than be a leader of fashion. But about their reading, "What shall they read?"

If possible, select the books, papers, etc., yourself. You can easily look over the book notices in a weekly, and this usually gives a tolerably fair criticism of scientific works, biographies, histories and novels. Boys usually like tales of adventure, and to a reasonable amount they should be gratified, for what would a man be without bravery and courage? When my boys were at the age to be attracted by such reading, the principal of the grammar school they attended put a list of books on the blackboard for the use of pupils who cared to profit by it. There was the War of the Rebellion, Life of Washington, and others I fail to remember, but various kinds; and for light reading, one or two of Scott's and Dickens's novels. I always felt grateful to him, and think the plan might be followed by the teachers.

At the public libraries, sometimes an attendant will tell of a popular work, but that is not always safe to go by, as not always is a popular book a good one. You must find out about the books in your own way, but be sure to find out in some way. There are many books and papers in the world, some people say too many, but there are more good ones than bad ones, and you must sift them out. Don't trust the innocent child to do it for himself. If a home-life is what it should be, bad books and bad companions will not be there; and mother at home evenings will be a friend and playmate to the boys and girls. By this I don't mean they are to have no friends or mates, but you'll see they will feel so proud of their mother they'll bring them to see you, and you will be able to judge whether they are fit associates or not. In all this, remember the mothers have the love of their children, the fathers the respect, it is said, but let us have both.

### TO REMOVE IRON RUST FROM WHITE GOODS.

—Wet the stained place in cold water, then mix equal quantities of cream tartar and table salt, and place the mixture upon it until the dampness has absorbed in a measure the stain. Place the goods in the sun, and wet the place as often as dry until the rust is entirely removed. To remove fruit stains from table linen, if recent, stretch the article tightly across the tub, and pour boiling water on the stained places, but it must be done before applying soap. Mildewed linen may be restored by putting soap on the spots while wet, and covering them with pulverized chalk. Ink stains, where logwood has been used in the manufacture of it, may be removed by the application of chloride of lime. To remove grease from silk, lay a woolen blanket upon the table, upon which spread the garment smoothly, right side downward; lay a piece of brown paper over the greased spot, and apply a flat iron hot enough to scorch the paper; about eight seconds is usually sufficient time to remove it.