

## THE HOUSEHOLD.

## AS YE HAVE OPPORTUNITY.

BY M. E. KENNEY.

There was a decided frown of discontent upon Mrs. Harper's usually cheery face. True, domestic circumstances were so sadly awry that almost any housekeeper would have frowned, but Mrs. Harper generally maintained her equilibrium under any and all circumstances, so that it was an occasion worthy of special note when her placid face was ruffled.

It was not simply because the baby and herself were cutting a troublesome tooth. When Mrs. Harper spoke of the baby's undertakings in the matter of teeth she always included herself, for she insisted that it was a joint performance, and required their united energies and endurance.

Nor was it because the kitchen range would not draw, and the maid-of-all-work had succumbed to the grippe and gone up to her room for an indefinite term of days. Mrs. Harper had been undaunted by greater difficulties than these.

It was the mood in which she had awakened that brought those perpendicular lines between her eyes.

It was a mood in which

"The daily round, the trivial task,"

seemed particularly unsatisfactory, and her life seemed a failure, full of unsatisfied aspirations and unfulfilled longings.

There were people whose lives seemed to be a benediction, blessing every one with whom they came in contact. There was Mrs. Blake, for instance, the senior elder's wife, who abounded in good works. She was at the head of all the church organizations, her influence was a power in itself, and she had ample means and abundant leisure, both of which were wholly consecrated.

It was not much wonder that Mrs. Harper felt herself comparatively useless, especially when she left out of consideration the fact that Mrs. Blake's opportunities differed from her own.

Something of her discouragement she had confided to her husband that morning when she had followed him out into the hall to help him on with his hat and coat and say goodby in the lover-like fashion that this husband and wife were too wise to abandon. The cheery influence of that farewell caress went all through the business hours with Mr. Harper, and he fancied that it made him stronger and braver to take his part in the battle of the bread winners.

"So you feel useless?" he had answered. "Well, my dear, I should call a little woman like yourself most particularly useful. It seems to me that it must take a good deal of wise management and a world of unselfishness to make the cheeriest, most sunny home in town, to give a baby the splendid start in life that only a mother's continual care and supervision can ensure, to make nephew Will think that an evening at home is a greater treat than to spend it at any place of entertainment, when he is just at the age when most young men want to break away from home restraints, and to brighten up every one who comes in contact with you, from the grocer's boy up to the minister himself. Do good unto all men as ye have opportunity, you remember. Watch for your opportunities, wifey, and you'll find you have a many, and use them as well, as Mrs. Blake, though they may not be just the same."

The frown had vanished at these loving words, but it soon crept back again. She stopped beside the cradle as she passed through the sitting-room, and taking up the baby which had just awakened, kissed the lips, which were ominously curled, into a happy smile which crept over her own face as the downy baby head nestled on her shoulder so lovingly.

An impatient tattoo on the kitchen door was the first thing that demanded attention, and Mrs. Harper found Mickey the grocer's boy there waiting for orders.

"What's the matter with your hand, Mickey?" she asked after the boy had noted down her orders, as she noticed a raw place on his left hand which looked as if it must be very painful.

"I got a bad burn," the boy answered. "I've been putting one thing and another

on it, but everything knocks into it, and somehow it don't get better."

"It ought to be wrapped up," said Mrs. Harper. "I have got some famous salve upstairs, Mickey, and if you can wait a few minutes I will run and get it and then bandage it up in a piece of soft old linen."

"That'll be fine," Mickey answered, with a smile that spread across his face. It was only a short piece of work to spread the cooling salve over the raw red sore, and to bind it up with the deftness acquired by one who has had experience in ministering to a boy's casualties. Baby sat on the table and watched the operation with wide open, wondering eyes.

"That feels better nor the well hand now," said Mickey, gratefully, as he started off.

The kitchen fire yielded at last to skilful coaxing, baby forgot her tooth in the delights of the clothes-pin bag and its contents, and the morning's work, which had seemed in a hopelessly chaotic state, was speedily marshalled into orderly array under the capable hands of the mistress.

In the middle of the busy morning a book agent came in, a poor woman who was pitifully persistent in trying to dispose of a volume.

It was not a book that Mrs. Harper wanted, nor felt that she could afford, and she was tempted to be impatient as her visitor lingered and took up so much of her precious time, but she controlled her inclination and was as courteous and kind as she would have been to any friend who might have come in thus inopportunistly.

Noticing how chilled and tired the woman seemed, she excused herself a moment and with the baby in her arms warmed a cup of coffee that had been left from breakfast and took it into the parlor with a piece of cake. It meant extra steps on a day when every step counted, and even the washing of two or three extra dishes was to be considered, but Mrs. Harper felt repaid by the different expression that brightened up the tired face. She had not been able to give money, but sympathy and interest were just as acceptable.

Up to Nora's room she toiled a dozen times that day to see that she took her medicine, waiting upon her with a kindly willingness that made the poor girl feel that even if she were only a domestic she had a place of her own in this home, and a share in its sympathy and interest.

The impatient, fretful baby was soothed every few minutes with a tenderness and a mother touch that comforted her in spite of pain and feverishness, and as Mrs. Harper noted how her touch could quiet the little one, the beautiful Bible words repeated themselves to her "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

A poor woman came in during the afternoon to ask for help for her family who had been burned out. Again Mrs. Harper sighed over her empty purse, but she could give warm sympathy, and by going up in the attic and rummaging, she could find some carefully-mended garments which she had put away for just such an occasion.

That evening when Will came home to supper, Mrs. Harper was surprised to see him usher a strange boy into the parlor. It could not be that he had brought any one home to supper!

"Auntie," he exclaimed, rushing out into the kitchen as one who expects sympathy. "I wonder if you will mind that I brought Ed. Symonds home with me. He's a new boy in the store, and has only been in the city two or three weeks, and some of the fellows want to get hold of him and show him about town. They're a fast set, and Ed. will get in a scrape if he goes with them. He told me he had a great mind to go with them to-night, for he was so lonesome, and so I didn't dare run the risk, and I just brought him home with me. I'll help with the dishes or anything. You don't mind, do you, auntie dear?"

"Of course not, Will. I haven't much for supper, but I'll make up for it in welcome, and if you wish to leave him to entertain himself in the parlor with the pictures a while, I will stir up some waffles and you can bake them."

"Hurrah for you, auntie," and excusing himself to his guest Will donned a big apron and baked a plateful of crisp, delicious waffles.

How the homesick country boy enjoyed this bit of home life, even to helping Will

wipe the dishes afterwards, and when Mrs. Harper in bidding him good-bye, added cordially:

"Come as often as you will. There will always be a welcome here for you," he answered.

"If I can come here once in a while, I won't ever want to go with those other fellows."

It had been an unconscious crisis in the boy's life, and that taste of pure home pleasures had routed the powers of evil.

Yet Mrs. Harper accounted the day one in which she had done nothing worth while. If she could have looked down upon it as the angels saw it from above, she could have seen that each trifling deed was a bit in a beautiful mosaic, the pattern of which was designed by the great Artist, and that she had filled out its exquisite design by doing just what came next, "as ye have opportunity."—*Advocate.*

## BAGS AND BAGS.

Bags have come to be important adjuncts to the home. They may be made of scraps of all kinds and their beauty will depend quite as much upon the taste and skill used in the combination of materials as upon the materials themselves.

The rush woven bags so much used by ladies shopping are easily made more capacious and artistic if a width of silk be sewn in about the top and cords or ribbon be added as a drawing string. The same with a deeper top would serve an admirable purpose hung in the sewing-room as a piece bag for the reception of odds and ends of dress goods, linings, bleached muslin, and the like. Again, line the entire bag with bright China silk shirred in, leaving a deep shirring to stand up at the top; tie the handles together with a ribbon bow large enough to prettily conceal them, and the bag may be made to do duty as a holder of Kodak pictures and large photographs of places and things. These rush bags cost but ten cents at any variety store.

The society girl needs a party bag in which to carry her slippers, fan, and gloves. Japanese crepe in dark blue and white or brown and white will be suitable. The bag should be fourteen inches wide and eighteen inches long and lined with cambric to match the outside. Divide the bag into three compartments—the largest, occupying one-half the width, should be for slippers, and the smaller ones for fan and gloves. It should have no drawing string but a frill of lace may be set about the top and should be carried on the arm by means of a long strap of the material.

A bag for the reception of soiled handkerchiefs and laces is convenient if hung near one's dressing-table. Make it of a gay colored Turkish towel doubled in half and sewed into a bag. Turn the fringed ends down at the top and run shirrs for the drawing cords.

Another, for shreds and cuttings from the work table, will be bright and pretty made of Turkey red calico and ecru linen—using the red for the bottom and the linen for the top. Sew on each side exactly in the middle a little Japanese figure which is printed on crepe and may be bought at the art stores for two or three cents apiece. Draw the bag at the top with a red cord leaving a standing frill of the goods as a finish.

A nice bag for the sitting-room dust cloth may be made of cretonne if the pattern be outlined with heavy silk in Kensington stitch. Gold cord couched on with gold colored silk would be still more effective.

An opera-glass bag is most serviceable made of chamois skin. Get dead-leaf brown for color and about the top embroider or paint a band of leaves in autumn tints of yellow, scarlet, and russet. Little silk handkerchiefs lined with thin chamois skin or canton flannel also make pretty opera-glass bags. Cut and make the lining first the correct size. Now gather one handkerchief for each side down to the size of the bag by running a thread an inch or two on three sides of each handkerchief leaving the embroidered edge to fall as a ruffle all around. The silk will also be pushed on each side of the bag. Two colors of handkerchiefs, say olive and pink with olive and pink ribbons to shirr it about the top would be very pretty.

Bags of white linen embroidered all over with detached flowers as wild violets or daisies or clover leaves are useful for many

things. The work may be done in crewels and the bags may be washed.

A pretty set of button bags may be made from small pieces of chamois skin of different colors. The bags should be but two or three inches long and should be fastened together to help furnish the work basket.—*Housekeeper.*

## POULTRY-RAISING FOR WOMEN.

"Raising poultry," said an experienced woman to a young friend who asked how she could get the best living in the most comfortable fashion. "Raise poultry. There is nothing within the range of woman's capability to-day that is so profitable and altogether manageable as poultry-raising. Once get a bit of a start, and with any kind of reasonable management there is no doubt about making a fair living. Don't understand me that I have any idea about your getting rich out of it. The fortunes that are made in the poultry business are few and far between, but a comfortable competence ought to be realized by anybody who has reasonable sense and plenty of patience. Of strength not a very great amount is required, although one should not be an invalid and undertake such labors, for it is instant in season and out of season and work that cannot be neglected no matter what the feelings of the proprietor of the establishment may be.

"In starting in this business, there is one thing to be kept very prominently in view, and that is: Do not branch out at the outset. Go slowly and carefully at first, begin in a small way, and if not familiar with the business, invest very little until experience comes with practical observation. It is not wise for a beginner to attempt anything with an incubator. It is expensive and risky, and repeated failure has demonstrated to many of those who have tried it that unless conducted on a rather large scale and handled by an experienced person, it is likely to cost more than it comes to. Old hens are cheaper and safer than incubators. With careful management, it is possible to hatch about ninety percent of the eggs put under the hens, and in many instances eighty percent have grown to the broiler age. With the incubator, they lack the natural vitality of the parent bird and are neither as robust nor active as chickens brought up by the hen.

"It is much more satisfactory to hatch a less number of chicks and have the majority of them grow than to incubate an immense number and lose half of them. One has neither the cost of the eggs nor the plant to figure on, the loss upon which is no inconsiderable item. If chicks are hatched in February and kept comfortably warm, ten out of every twelve ought to live to a profitable age. Incubator-raised chicks are almost worthless for layers. They are very pretty looking, but seem to lack something, and never give the satisfaction that one may expect from birds brought up in the natural way. After all is said and done, the good dame, Nature, has very comfortable ways of her own, and it would bother her oftentimes too smart children to improve upon her results."

## RECIPES.

(From Miss Parloa's New Cook Book.)

**MACARONI IN GRAVY.**—Twelve sticks of macaroni, one and a half pints of stock, one scant tablespoonful of flour, one generous tablespoonful of butter, salt, pepper. Break and wash the macaroni. Put it in a saucepan with the stock. Cover, and simmer half an hour. Mix the butter and flour together. Stir this and the seasoning in with the macaroni. Simmer ten minutes longer, and serve. A tablespoonful of grated cheese may be added.

**COLD TAPIOCA PUDDING.**—Soak a cupful of tapioca over night in a quart of cold water. In the morning drain off all the water. Put the tapioca and a quart and a half a pint of milk in the double boiler. After cooking forty-five minutes, add a teaspoonful of salt. Stir well, and cook fifteen minutes longer. Wet a mould or bowl in cold water. Turn the pudding into this, and set away to cool. Serve with sugar and cream. This pudding is also nice.

**ORANGE JELLY.**—One of the best and most toothsome of orange jellies can be made as follows: To two quarts of calves-foot jelly, that has been well clarified, add three pounds of loaf sugar, the juice of two lemons and of six oranges, the thinly-pared rind of two oranges, and one stick of cinnamon broken up. Beat slightly the whites of six eggs and mix all well together in a preserving kettle. Set it on the fire and let it boil briskly for half an hour, then throw in a cup of cold water and let it boil twenty minutes longer. Have a flannel jelly-bag, made shape of a V, scald it and pour the jelly into it carefully. Tie it where it can keep warm while the jelly runs through. Then set the bowl of jelly in a cool place to get firm.