

HOUSEHOLD.

Pulling Together.

(Helen H. Thomas, in 'Michigan Advocate'.)

'What a rare and beautiful sight that is,' said one, as she nodded toward a mother and son walking on the opposite side of the street. 'See how lover-like the son acts as he almost carries along the mother who leans on his protecting arm.'

'Yes,' said the friend at her side, 'when I see how love-shielded that woman is in her widowhood, I feel more keenly my own childless condition.'

'Yet, on the other hand,' the first speaker made haste to say, as the foregoing was accompanied by a long-drawn sigh, 'just look at Mrs. Blank, whose three sons are breaking her heart. What a difference between those two mothers! In one case the sons seem to vie with each other in their efforts to make their mother's life worth living, now that her devoted husband has slipped away, while in the other case the fast whitening hair and drawn face of Mrs. Blank are in evidence that what "they say" is true when the verdict is "heartless neglect."'

'Yes, when I think of her I am reconciled to my childless home,' said the second speaker, as the women who had left their youth behind them walked on. 'It must be nice to be love-protected, as is Mrs. Grey, but loneliness is nothing to the heart-ache that must be part of the life of one whose children are ungrateful and reckless.'

As the friends at this juncture entered the home of one who had lived her life in the city whose streets they walked, these same widowed mothers, the dutiful sons in one instance and the reverse in the other, were again discussed, one saying:

'I cannot understand what should make the difference. Mrs. Blank is as devoted a Christian mother as is Mrs. Grey, and I see no reason why one mother's sons should be a trial, and those of the other a comfort. Can you, grandma?'

At this query, the aged one who had been in and out of each home since its formation, said, with a shake of her head:

'Yes, I know what has made the difference in those boys; some folks might call it heredity, and all that sort of thing, but I say it is all owing to the difference in the fathers.'

Just then the one who has an illustration to fit every subject lying near her heart, spied a heavily-laden team slowly ascending the hilly street, and pointing to it, said:

'Just see how each horse strains every muscle to draw that load. But if the off horse had all the pulling to do, it would never reach the top of the hill.'

'But we were talking of women and children, not horses, grandma,' said one, laughingly.

'I know it, but the rule that fits one case does the other,' was the answer of the observant woman. 'Mothers are, as a rule, willing to draw the whole load of raising a family, but it takes two to make a success of it. Now Mr. Blank was only a father in name. True, he prided himself on being a good provider, but carting provisions into one's house and paying bills promptly don't go far toward making dutiful children.'

'Mr. Blank was almost a stranger to his boys, even to the day of his death. He never seemed to take any interest in their studies and amusements. His business and clubs seemed to absorb him so wholly as to leave him no time for his family, consequently the boys met all their mother's arguments with, "Pa don't care!" and in spite of her pleadings they grew up to be what you see them. So, when the so-called father died suddenly, the wife did not lose a helpmeet nor the boys any restraint.'

'Mr. Grey, on the contrary, was an ideal husband and father. He occupied a place of honor in the world, but "our sons" were never lost sight of. Wife and children were always first with him. He was rarely seen outside of his home evenings, except to attend religious services. From their infancy his children ran to him with their joys and sorrows as freely as to the mother.'

'Mr. Grey was always a courteous gentleman in his home, too, and treated his wife with such deference that it is little wonder that his sons treat their mother like a queen. I have been in the home for weeks at a time,

and I do not hesitate to say that those boys never knowingly gave their mother a heart-ache. Is it strange, then, that now the fatherless children treat the mother with such lover-like care.'

'Perhaps you are right, grandma, as far as the two instances under discussion go, but what would you say of a case where the parents did pull together, and still the result was sons as heartless and reckless as are Mrs. Blank's.'

'I should say that it was the exception to the rule,' said the aged one, with such force that she dropped a stitch in her knitting. 'I've heard of such instances, but I've had my doubts about the genuineness of the pulling on both sides.'

'There are cases, too, grandma, where some brave mother, with a poor stick of a husband, brings up sons to be proud of, because of her faith in God and her efforts to help answer her own prayers.'

'Yes, yes, I admit it, but I still insist upon it that such sons as Mrs. Grey's would not be so rare as to excite comment, if there were more fathers and mothers pulling together.'

Home Courtesy.

Arriving one afternoon at a small town, a speaker was met by the president of the local W.C.T.U., a soft-voiced woman, with a young face under silvered hair.

As the two ladies were riding along the shady street, pupils from the public school began to throng the sidewalks.

At a crossing, a bright-faced boy about ten years old stood waiting for the ladies to pass, and lifted his cap with a courteous gesture and sunny smile.

The hostess leaned from the carriage with a pleasant greeting, and the grey cap covered the brown curls again as they drove on. 'One of your Sunday-school class?' ventured the speaker. 'No,' replied the hostess, 'my only son, Harry.'

As they approached the home, they nearly overtook a young girl of about fourteen, and a middle-aged man, walking briskly. The man was listening in a deferential way to the girl's merry chatter. At the gate they paused, the man lifted his hat in a parting salutation, as he held the gate for the girl to precede him, then bowing, he passed on, as if hurried, not observing the approaching carriage.

'This is our home; that is my husband going to his office,' said the hostess.

'And you have another guest, or is the young lady a caller?' asked the speaker.

'That is Margaret, our eldest child. She and her father are great chums,' replied the hostess.

At the daintily-appointed tea-table, the youngest child, a bashful girl of seven or eight years, had the misfortune to drop and break a fragile piece of china. Her face crimsoned with distress, and the violet eyes lifted to her mother's face were large with gathering tears. The speaker winced, dreading discordant notes where all had been harmonious. 'I hope they will only send her away in disgrace—poor little thing!' her thoughts ran on. But even as she thought, with perfect courtesy the mother spoke the same conventional words of reassurance which she would have used had the honored guest broken the cup. Seeing the quivering lip of her cherished child—her guest from God—she added, softly: 'Mother knows you are sorry, dearest. Just let it pass, and overcome it,' while the father, with ready tact, engaged the speaker in conversation.

The speaker was charmed. That evening, walking to the meeting with another white ribboner, she could not resist saying: 'Your president seems wonderfully blessed in her children.'

'Yes, but she has her anxieties as well as the rest of us,' was the unexpected reply. 'Margaret has grown so winning that even the college boys would walk around by the high school to walk and talk with her, until her father quietly happened to be returning from the court house to his office, past their house, every time. Yes, it does take his time; but he is queer. He thinks it is one of the things his time is for. He thinks it pays.'

'Then Harry. Two years ago he was so shy it made him seem really rude; he just could not speak to people. And little Madge is still so timid that harshness would be fatal to her. This is our church.' The speaker had food for thought.—'The New Crusade.'

Hospitality and Poverty.

She had been a woman of slender means all her life. This meant that the coming of friends was a serious drain upon a purse never too full. She welcomed them always, and gave them the best that she could afford; but she dared not ask them often, nor did she go beyond the old circle of friendships to a wider one. She could not afford it, she declared. Hospitality was a luxury for the rich, not for the poor.

Then suddenly the word became luminous in her Bible. Use hospitality without grudging; be given to hospitality; a lover of hospitality—how persistent the command was, and it made no distinction between rich and poor. Besides, were there not many all about her poorer than she to whom an hour at her simple table would be a treat to be lived over and over in the monotony of weary days?

So she began her simple ministry, and she found, to her surprise, that it was not bread and meat that people wanted, but the finer hospitality of the soul, and that—oh! God could give her that every day! She need never again feel poor or empty-handed. Suddenly her empty life had deepened to rich experiences and exhaustless interest.

Now, this isn't a lesson upon the grace of hospitality. It is merely a suggestion to any to whom life, which God meant to be joyous and enthusiastic, seems poor and bare of interest. If, as in the days of the prophet, 'joy is withered away' from us, there is one remedy always. Take one command of the New Testament and live it day by day with all the power of earnestness that is ours. Straightway life will have greater meaning and more beautiful purposes, and people upon whom we had looked with indifferent eyes will claim wonderful and tender kinship with us, and the abundant life which Christ came to bring will transfigure all our days.—'Forward.'

Fruits.

'I wish,' said a doctor, who had been watching a group of school children troop out of a candy store, where they had been spending their pennies, 'that I could form a society among little folks in which each member would pledge to spend all his pocket money for fruit instead of candy.' Parents ought, says a Boston paper, to use their influence in this direction. The craving for sweets can often be satisfied by a banana, an orange, some dates or raisins—any of which are more healthful than cheap candies. If the children must have candy, teach them to make it themselves at home as early as possible.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

USE **BABY'S OWN** SOAP

NORTHERN MESSENGER

(A Twelve Page Illustrated Weekly).

One yearly subscription, 30c.

Three or more copies, separately addressed, 25c. each.

Ten or more to an individual address, 20c. each.

Ten or more separately addressed, 25c. per copy.

When addressed to Montreal City, Great Britain and Postal Union countries, 52c postage must be added for each copy; United States and Canada free of postage. Special arrangements will be made for delivering packages of 10 or more in Montreal. Subscribers residing in the United States can remit by Post Office Money Order on Rouse's Point, N.Y. or Express Money Order payable in Montreal.

Sample package supplied free on application.

JOHN DOUGALL & SON,
Publishers, Montreal.

THE 'NORTHERN MESSENGER' is printed and published every week at the 'Witness' Building, at the corner of Craig and St. Peter streets, in the city of Montreal, by John Redpath Dougall and Frederick Eugene Dougall, both of Montreal.

All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son, and all letters to the editor' should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'