

HOUSEHOLD.

Boys and Buttons.

I was not acquainted with the lady, but I had often seen her and heard that she was 'in business'—a fact conveying to my mind the impression that she was away from home the greater part of the day. She kept house, but, a rumor had it, she kept no servant and had adopted two destitute children. But a few days ago I heard some remarks of hers which suggested that she might have some commendable methods of accomplishing a large amount of work. I was waiting for my car in the Rapid Transit Transfer Station, when this woman and a Mrs. Banks, who was well known as a rather talkative, inquisitive person, entered and sat down together.

'How do you ever get along, I'd just like to know! And those two strapping boys! How old are they?' asked Mrs. Banks.

'Rob is twelve and Tom is ten.'

'And you make their pants and shirt waists and everything! Why do you do it?'

'Cheaper. I could hardly afford to keep them properly clothed if I had to buy every thing for them.'

'And the mending—buttons and all! Don't I know how one boy can keep me mending and sewing on buttons until I'm tired! Isn't it an awful bother?'

'No bother at all.'

'O. now, that's all talk! You're mortal just like the rest of us. It must take just as much time for you to sew on a button as for anybody!'

'I never have sewed on their buttons.'

'Mercy, what makes them stay! When they play with my Harry I've noticed again and again their buttons are always on—shoes and waists and pants and all. Why don't they come off?'

'They do come off.'

'Just what I said. And how do they get on?'

'The boys sew them on.'

'Well, since when have boys taken to sewing on buttons! I'd like to see Harry sewing one once! Why, he would let his clothes drop off first.'

'Rob and Tom have no choice about it. They have to sew on their buttons just the same as they have to comb their own hair and wash their own faces.'

'But how do they know how?'

'It was no trouble to teach them that. Anybody can learn to sew on a button properly.'

'It would bother me more than doing it myself. Harry would shout, "Ma, where's a needle? where's some thread? Ma, I can't find the scissors! where's a button?" And then it wouldn't be done.'

'How do you manage?'

'My boys never leave their room with a button off. If a button is off when they go up stairs, it must be on when they come down. Each boy has a little case I made him—a longish paste-board box, the width of a large spool. Wires across the box at even distances, and on each wire is a spool—a spool of coarse white thread, of coarse black thread, of black linen thread, and of medium size black and white thread. The box is fastened to the wall and the spools can't get away. Each boy has a pair of scissors hanging by a long ribbon to a nail by the box. Fastened to the box is a needle-book, a pin-cushion, a piece of wax and an emery. On top of the box is another box containing every kind of button on the boys' clothes. Every Saturday night they darn their own stockings. I had to darn my own stockings when I was ten, and if a girl can a boy can.'

'At any rate you make their clothes!'

'Yes, but the most I do is the cutting out and finishing. The boys do all the machine sewing, or nearly all. Rob says he could make a whole shirt waist if it weren't for the buttonholes, and I believe he could.'

'Don't they object? Harry would fuss the life out of himself and complain until I went wild!'

'Probably because he would feel that you expected him to object. My boys accept the situation as philosophically as they do eating with their forks and taking baths. They are better off for doing such things. It impresses them with a sense of personal responsibility.'

'They must be very queer boys,' said Mrs. Banks, incredulously.

At that moment the queer boys appeared upon the scene. After hearing this conversation I naturally eyed their clothes very

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THE Queen's Coronation is to be commemorated next week, as Queen Victoria then completes the sixtieth year of her reign. Grand preparations for this event are now being made in every part of her vast empire. To celebrate it the next issue of "Northern Messenger" will have **Four Pages** more than usual. The extra pages will be filled with **Queen's Jubilee Matter** and **appropriate Pictures**.

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closely. They were unquestionably well fastened together. The ornamental buttons on their trouser knees, usually lacking in whole or in part, were all on. Their shoes were well blacked, their black stockings were well pulled up, their neckties were well tied; in fact, they seemed noticeably well dressed, though close observation failed to show that they wore a fortune on their backs.

The three left the station and I went home meditating on many things concerning boys and buttons.—'Congregationalist.'

The Sanitary Kitchen.

We place our parlors and dining rooms with reference to nice ideas of light, shade and outlook. Even the halls and lodging rooms are objects of some solicitude and care, but the kitchen must often take up with what despised and narrow space there may be left. Many there are who think this room needs only a cramped and limited area; and those who allow for it reasonable space do not mind how dark and dreary it may be or how poorly furnished for the personal comfort of its occupants.

The kitchen, as its name implies, is the cooking-room. Why should it be so often a dark, doleful and forbidding place? It must be planned, first of all, of course, for cleanliness, and its furniture should lend itself readily to that end, but when this prime factor is accomplished there can be no harm in a few pictures on the wall, now that pleasant touches and pictures are so various and so cheap. It is not impossible to dispose rugs in a kitchen, or even to have a carpet of a pleasing kind therein. Some easy chairs there should be, even if one in the city kitchen should sometimes prove inviting to Bridget's cousin.

There will come no harm either, from a rocking-chair; for, one of the chief duties in this apartment, sometimes, when important cooking is under way, is to watch and wait. And a moment's easy rest at this time is a preparation for better performed duty. To look out through a pleasantly-lighted and nicely arranged window in the country; to have flowers about the door, and to get a taste of the bracing breeze or the surrounding air, are not by any means extravagant requirements on behalf of this room.

It will be remembered that the heat and

steam and chores of a kitchen, whether in city or country, are a burden to be borne where one must be for hours together in the atmosphere begotten of them. They dull the appetite, depress the spirits, and are detrimental to health. Careful ventilation, therefore, is a need demanded there almost more than anywhere else. The best kitchens I know are not very often those belonging to wealthy circles or in elegant houses. They are in many instances those belonging to large and old-fashioned farm houses, where three of the walls touch the out-of-doors, and where the large fire-place and possibly the old brick chimney attached even still remain.—'Journal of Hygiene.'

NORTHERN MESSENGER.

(To the Editor of the 'Northern Messenger'.)

Sir,—The 'Messenger' is very highly appreciated in our school, and since its change by which it was so much improved it is an exceptionally good Sunday-school paper. Both old and young are anxious to read it on Sunday evenings, and as it is in a double sheet and not stitched it is generally divided.

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