

THE HOUSEHOLD.

TEMPTATIONS OF FARM LIFE.

BY EVA KINNEY GRIFFITH.

There is a wide-spread fallacy among the residents of rural districts that their children are absolutely safe from the temptations of the drinking saloon, and hence, it is not necessary to instruct them thoroughly against the evils of intemperance.

That God's beautiful country is not frequently marred by the foul blot of saloons along its wide, smooth roads and beautiful meadows is a cause for profound thankfulness; nevertheless, farm life has its temptations which cannot be ignored.

In the autumn, when the golden and russet fruit is being garnered into granaries and cellars, when farm neighbors work more or less together, gathering in groups now here and now there, there is always the cider-mill with its deceptive allurements and promises of gain.

The young man of the family is sent to the mill with a load of apples and he meets other young men on the same errand. They stop for a while, perhaps to await an opportunity to unload, perhaps for gossip over the crops and a new horse that one of them has purchased. Cider is all about them in vats, tubs, kegs and barrels in all the different stages of fermentation. How easy to take a drink every now and then as they talk.

Now it happens that cider ferments at a much lower temperature than almost any other sweet liquid. The cider-mill is always a fairly warm place and often the liquid can be seen fermenting in the tub into which the juice pours from the mill. The tiny white bubbles which show that alcohol is forming gather in groups and rows about the sides of the tub and can be seen by any one who pauses to examine. This same sweet cider, still with the little bubbles in it, is brought to the cornfield where the huskers are busy and often put in the cellar to be used at any time during the autumn work.

Although the percentage of alcohol is very small in this new cider, varying greatly according to the manner in which it is made and the length of time it stands, yet there is always a sufficient quantity to create an appetite for itself if it is drunk persistently. As the winter comes on the cider grows harder, that is, more alcohol is formed in it, yet still it is used as a beverage by many families.

The craving for alcoholic stimulants is thus formed unconsciously, while the boy is still on the farm, to be developed later when he comes in contact with stronger drinks or perhaps to be fostered by home-made cider and beer until it has mastered him.

Another dangerous temptation in farm life is the sheep-sheering. It is then that neighbors and friends are gathered together in one place. It is warm weather, the work is arduous, the workers must have something to drink and in too many places beer is furnished by the farmer whose sheep are being sheared. Often young men who have never used this beverage, drink it for the first time at a sheep-sheering.

Threshing days and trips to the market, and the county fair have also their temptations to the farm boy, for whom the 'prince of tempters' has set as sure a watch as for any other class of people. To protect the country home, then, from this enemy requires as persistent vigilance as to protect the city home, and wives, sisters and mothers need to be awake to this fact.

What can you do? Why, watch the enemy's every move and dispute each inch of ground with him. Does he tempt the young with cider? Give them scientific instruction in the schools, where they will be taught the exact composition of cider, what constitutes fermentation and how the alcohol is formed by it. Show them how to prove the existence of alcohol in the cider by actually distilling the alcohol from it. Then teach them how even a small amount of alcohol, when drunk in cider or other liquid, will create an appetite for itself, and you will then have the child fortified against the temptation of cider drinking.

At sheep-sheering time seek to persuade farmers not to provide beer for the men, but instead offer to furnish them with some cool, refreshing, home-made drink that shall take the place of beer. Here is still

a field for woman's invention. To make up home drinks, which shall be cool, thirst-quenching and palatable, without being in any way intoxicating.

But sometimes the farm boy wearies of the dull routine and isolation of farm life and comes to the city to seek his fortune. Too often his love of adventure, his desire to see the sights, leads him among evil associates, and ignorant of the power of the insidious enemy he encounters, before he is aware of it he is in the demon's clutches. Mr. Paxton, now deceased, the former active and energetic secretary of the Citizen's League, in his annual reports used to tell us of hundreds and thousands of farm boys, from the contiguous states of Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin, whom he found in the saloons of Chicago, some but just starting on the downward course and others far gone in sin and vice. Many of these were minors and were rescued by Mr. Paxton and returned to their homes, but alas, many others went on to lives of crime.

Anything that can be done to make farm life attractive, anything that can be invented to vary its monotony and make the boys contented to stay on the farm, will help to prevent this deplorable state of affairs. Cannot the Y's do something by forming clubs and Chautauqua circles among the young people, and creating a pleasant comradeship among them? To be loved, to be thought of consequence, is always helpful to young people—it will hold them and keep them together. Many a young man has been saved from entering upon an evil course by being made much of at home.—*Union Signal*.

KEEPING UP WITH THE CHILDREN.

She was a woman of middle age, thin and plain, with no claim to beauty except the eager, dark eyes shining star-like from a wistful, care-lined face. Twenty years ago she had slipped her trustful hand into that of another, and counting the world well lost for the sake of her love and faith, had entered upon a life of such toil, privation, and heroic endurance as only women in frontier settlements, amid primitive conditions, know.

'I have tried my best,' she said, simply, 'to keep up with the children. Father and I resolved, when our first boy was a baby, that, stint, and scrape and contrive as we might, we'd educate all that heaven sent us. And we have done what we could. I wasn't willing that my children should get ahead of me; I've tried to study their lessons with them, and to enter into their feelings. I don't want them to outstrip me in the race.'

This mother had been one of those to whom early rising and late retiring had been always essential, in order that the routine of housework should not suffer, that part of the country where she lived, hired help for domestic purposes was almost unheard of; women did their own work, a neighbor's daughter sometimes lending a kind hand in an exigency, and the men of the family doing their share at need. In her determined effort to keep step with her children, in their intellectual development, she had in another direction builded better than she knew; for the children, boys and girls alike, had early been pressed into her service, and had, as she explained, 'taken hold' of whatever was to be done. The boys could make beds and set tables as well as draw water and split wood. The girls were facile housekeepers, with a practical knowledge of cooking and laundry-work—in American society as essential in the outfit for life to the richest as to the poorest. Though the living in the household was plain, it was abundant, and the ideal set before the family was something nobler than a mere strife for wealth. Everything was open and above board. Books were read and prized in common, and so much was going on to interest everybody that there was no temptation to devour poisonous titbits in secret. So it came to pass that the keeping up with the children brought great good in its wake.

At last a day dawned when the mother felt as if the first stone had been set in a wall of separation. Two of her brood had found their wings. A daughter was going to college. A son was entering upon a business career. The little, wistful woman yearned to keep pace with them both,

yearned perhaps to ordain the pathway of both, as she always had done. But it was inevitable that there should be some parting of the roads. Brave as she was, she kept down the heartache under her cheery show of courage.

'Have, comfort dear,' said an older friend, who had been through a similar experience. 'The children will never outgrow you; you had a twenty years' start of them. And you have so disciplined your mind, and trained your heart, and elevated your own thoughts above the daily rut, the fret, and the stir, that you dwell in a serene atmosphere, favorable to expansion of every faculty. They may acquire facts, but they will fly like honey-laden bees back to the hive. The mother who has kept pace with her children from babyhood to adolescence will never lose them.'

ECONOMY OF STRENGTH.

Editor of *The Housewife's Club*.—Few women to-day are as strong physically as their grandmothers were, and one reason is that the grandmothers expended all their strength upon their household duties and so transmitted weakness instead of strength as a legacy of their offspring.

This is a subject which every housewife should carefully study, for upon its proper solution depends much of the happiness of her home. A nervous, exhausted wife and mother cannot properly perform the many duties that belong to her province.

First and most important, women must resolve that under no circumstances shall their health be sacrificed either to the demands of society, fashion, church work, reputation as a housekeeper, desire for wealth, or anything else. Each woman knows best the limits of her own strength and must arrange her work accordingly. Some, however, over-estimate their powers of endurance and have to suffer in consequence. It is best, if one's judgment prove faulty, to err on the safe side and to husband one's strength for an emergency rather than to draw upon it so heavily as to bring on nervous prostration or a severe and protracted illness.

One of the best ways to economize strength is in healthful dressing. The sensible woman will find if she will wear a well-fitting corset waist instead of a corset, and shoulder hose supporters in lieu of the old-time garters, with the clothing made to fit neatly but not tightly, and the weight all suspended from the shoulders, with nothing to restrict the action of the lungs, heart and stomach, or to compress the delicate organs, so often diseased in women, that she can perform her work of whatever nature it may be with less fatigue than when dressed in the old unhealthful way.

Next in importance to healthful dressing come regular habits. Sufficient sleep and plain wholesome food eaten at stated times are conducive of good health. A daily nap of five or ten minutes followed by a sponge bath will be found very refreshing to the weary housekeeper and her afternoon's work will be more easily performed for this half hour rest.

Recreation is another essential element in the economy of strength. If one cannot afford a vacation at the seaside or mountains, something less expensive can be substituted. An afternoon occasionally spent in the woods or by the river or lake, lazily swinging in the hammock while the children fish or gather flowers, followed by the simple lunch and the ride home in the cool of the day will prove a real boon to the tired mother.

Much work may be saved in the cooking if fewer rich dishes are served and the family will not suffer in consequence. Also in both the sewing and ironing, plain clothes will save much time and strength. Children should early be taught to wait on themselves and others and to assist in light housework. They will thus be taught usefulness, self-reliance and a regard for others; while at the same time the mother's strength will be saved for duties that she alone can perform.

A systematic arrangement of work will greatly assist the housekeeper in saving time and strength. Let each day's work be carefully planned beforehand and a memorandum made of the tasks that must be done, followed by a list of things that one desires to do; then begin with the most important and follow this order all through the day.

Don't let the baby cry while you make pies, or let the serious fault of a child go unproved while you embroider some useless piece of fancy work. Shun all trivial affairs and devote your best energies to work that will produce the best results.

Keep help if you are able and let some girl who needs the money and a good home do the work she understands as well as you do, while you save your strength to rear your children properly. Have all the labor saving contrivance you can procure, from the linoleum for your kitchen floor to save scrubbing, to the best carpet-sweeper and duster for your parlor. Arrange the house and work with a view to save steps and labor, and the more you study this subject the easier will it be to devise ways and means to economize strength.—*Pauline Palmer, in The Voice*.

SLEEP FOR WOMEN.

The average woman doesn't sleep enough; and that is why she finds herself growing fretful and irritable, a prey to nervous disorders. The increase of these troubles of the nerves is positively alarming; and it is a real trouble, and not an imaginary one, as some persons like to believe. The alleviation is, in many cases, in the sufferer's own hands; and the other women who as yet have not succumbed may prevent the disease by simply taking more sleep. A woman will plead that she hasn't time to lie down for a few minutes in the daytime; and she will infringe upon the hours of the night, which should be given to sound, healthy, needed sleep, in order to finish some piece of work which could as well be completed on the morrow. She will rush and hurry all day long; and then, when the household is hushed in slumber at night, she will sit up to read the daily paper, thinking she will not have to pay for the time she is stealing from the health-giving sleep that comes before midnight.

A physician, who is a specialist in nervous disorders, says that women should sleep at least nine hours at night and one hour in the daytime. Some women insist that they cannot sleep by daylight; but, if they persist every day in closing the eyes at a regular time, slumber will come, and rest to the nerves will follow.—*Exchange*.

STORAGE.

It appears that experiments in France have shown that fruits and vegetables stored under ordinary conditions, but heavily dusted with lime, will resist decay for a long time. Potatoes layered in lime kept for fourteen months, and were in as good condition as when dug. Beets, onions, apples, grapes and quinces similarly treated kept well for varying periods, but all for several months longer than they would have done ordinarily. The lime keeps away moisture, prevents the fruit from absorbing unpleasant odors, and destroys any microbes that may have found a resting place upon the skin or about the stem. This is a preventive within reach of all, and much cheaper than cold storage.

RECIPES.

BAKED Haddock.—Scrape the scales from a three or four pound fish and wipe thoroughly with a cloth wet in cold water. Fill with a stuffing made of a cup of cracker crumbs, a tablespoonful of minced onion, a quarter of a cup of melted butter, one-half teaspoonful of salt, and a salt spoonful each of pepper and thyme, one quarter cup of hot water and the yolks of two eggs. Now truss with the tail in the mouth, lay in a baking pan on thin slices of salt pork and brush all over with melted butter; sprinkle with salt, pepper and cracker crumbs. Bake about one hour basting two or three times. If the fish seems dry while baking, melt two tablespoonfuls of butter in half a cup of hot water and baste the fish often. This is a good way to bake any white fish. The recipe comes from the Boston Cooking School.

CHEESE Omelet.—*Maria Parlow, in Good Housekeeping*, says: For three or four people use two ounces of stale bread, free from crust, two ounces of grated or finely broken cheese, one gill of boiling water, one gill of cold milk, one level teaspoonful of salt, a grain of cayenne, one tablespoonful of butter and two eggs. Have the bread broken into small pieces, and pour the boiling water over it. When soft, add the salt, pepper and milk, and break up fine. Beat the yolks and whites of the eggs separately and stir them into the mixture. Add the cheese. Put the butter into a fryingpan and set over a hot fire. When the butter is so hot that it begins to turn brown, pour in the omelet and cook until it begins to get set, drawing the mixture back a little as you would a plain omelet. Now fold it and let it brown slightly. Turn out on a hot dish and serve immediately.