

THE HOUSEHOLD.

CARE OF CHILDREN.

Do not hurry a baby about walking; for there is never any need to try to teach a child that which Nature will teach it in her own good time, in a much better and safer way than you can. The best thing you can do for your baby, as soon as it is old enough to move about, is to put it on the floor, on a big cushion, or blanket, or even a piece of old carpet, and let it roll and tumble and stretch to its little heart's content, just as any other young animal does when its freedom is left to it. Give it a ball, or a rag doll, or some other safe plaything to crawl about after, and you will find that its legs and arms will find plenty to do, until it is strong enough to pull itself up by a chair or table and take its first tottering steps, after which the days of rest for its mother are gone by, and there is no safety except in constant watchfulness. If you want your boy or girl to be strong, you must be very patient with their little restless movements, for every one means the growth and development of some muscle, and ought not to be checked except when really necessary.

A healthy child will begin very early in life to make various sounds, which are Nature's preparation for speech, and these sounds should not be repressed, for it is only by making such sounds that a child can learn to talk. Of course, all cries or noises which show that the child is in pain, or tired, or hungry should be attended to at once; but a healthy child will never be a very quiet one, and a certain amount of noise-making seems to be essential to proper growth and development. So don't try to keep children always still; let them shout and prattle and chatter as much as they like, just as you let them struggle and reach and kick, with their little hands and feet. It is all a part of Nature's education and the less it is interfered with the better.

The rule may be broadly laid down that none except the very simplest medicines should be given without the advice of a doctor, and that even the simple medicines should be given as seldom and in as small quantities as possible. Dosing children with this, that and the other, is by far too common a habit among all classes, but especially among the ignorant, for it is safe to say that those who know most about children give them the least medicine. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and although it may be sometimes necessary to give drugs to little children, yet in nine cases out of ten, intelligent care in the first place will prevent any such necessity. When you see that a child is really ailing, go to a doctor or some person competent to advise you, and don't meddle with medicines of which you know little or nothing, for you are pretty certain to do more harm than good.—*Hampton Tract.*

TRIMMING YOUNG APPLE TREES.

SOME HINTS ON WHAT NOT TO DO.

There is nothing so easy to do as to neglect to trim a young orchard. We know this from experience. And there is this to it; a young tree grows very fast, and, when young and thrifty, we think it can be trimmed when it gets larger; so the very work that should be done is neglected at the time when it is most necessary to have it done. A year or two goes by, and at last you find out your little tree has got the better of you. We found this out yesterday, in pruning some young trees, which, though we must confess it, ought to have been attended to in this respect a year ago, but were neglected on account of pressing work in other directions at a time when it should have been done.

Young apple trees, if set in a good, hearty soil, will grow very fast. Limbs and shoots multiply in all directions. They crowd inward upon the tree, filling all the space with foliage; and, if you look at one of these young, untrained trees, growing in a good location, you will find a dense, round head which you can hardly see through anywhere for leaves. The lower part of the top is so shaded by this thick growth on the small shoots that the leaders of the main branches stretch upward rapidly for sun and breathing room. If neglected, therefore, in the matter of thinning in the early years of the tree's life, the main limbs attain a long, up-

right, slender growth which gives the trees too high a head, rendering them imperfect in shape and making the gathering of the fruit a difficult matter.

Now, supposing you attempt to trim and put into proper shape a not very old tree, which for two or three years had its own way of growing; what will you do, and what will result from your doings? You will, of course, begin to thin out the top, removing all branches that grow inward, crossing each other and shutting out the sun from the interior of the tree where it is most needed. Well, having removed these superfluous limbs about to your liking, what appearance does your tree present? Why, you have three or four tall, upright-growing branches, sticking straight up out of reach, and bearing a tuft of spreading twigs at their extremities. To shorten them in is almost impossible; to let them grow is to give you an ill-shaped tree which can never be well managed or brought into compact or desirable form.

The remedy for this is an easy one, if put in use at the right time. Begin to trim and shape the heads of your young trees as soon as they begin to grow. This done, and no pruning instrument larger than a stout pocket-knife will be needed. Train a low, round, compact-shaped head to the trees, allowing no branches to grow inward or upward, but training them outward, so as to give room for sun, air, and fruit. All this may be easily managed, if taken in season; if not taken in season, your tree gets beyond your control; you spoil it in attempting to bring it into shape, and then have ever after, a tree that is an eye-sore and disappointment to you. The first method of management is the right one; therefore, the best one.—*New England Farmer.*

HINTS TO YOUNG HOUSEKEEPERS.

BY MRS. F. M. HOWARD.

With your permission I would like to say a few words to the many brides to whom you go on your monthly visits, as they are a class to whom my heart warms, realizing so well, from my own stand-point of seven years' experience, how much a young housekeeper needs words of encouragement and assistance.

In the first place, I hope none of you need the advice, "Be content with small things to begin on," for you know that John is more than willing to do all and more than his means will warrant, and if you let him see that you are unhappy because Mrs. A. has a real sofa in her parlor while you have only a home-made one covered with turkey red calico, ten chances to one he will go off and buy you a new one, when he cannot afford it, and so on *ad libitum*, until his affairs get cramped, and business blues and possibly failure follows.

In furnishing, above all have your home-like; there is an indescribable something which makes a room home-like or the reverse. In my own home there is nothing elegant, nor even passably nice, yet so many have said, "Why, Mrs. H. you don't know how cosy you look here!" It may be the scarlet lambrequins (home-made) over the lace curtains; the variety of pictures, not a grand one among them, or the bird cage and aquarium, or the many curiosities we have collected, but I would not change my little parlor for many a grander one I know of.

Another item of housekeeping is entertaining company. A young housekeeper naturally feels anxious to have everything in apple pie order, and her table loaded with dainties, and, if she is one of that numerous class who do their work alone, she tries and flurries herself into an embryo fit of sickness before the visit is over. My experience has been that visiting is far more enjoyable to both hostess and guests, if a plain table is set with as little flurry and hard work as possible; light bread or biscuit, butter, tea, one kind of sauce, one or, at the most, two kinds of cake, with tarts, dried beef or whatever else of the kind you can get without special preparation, is enough of a supper for any one but an epicure. I must confess that if I imagine my friends come to see me for the sake of my flesh pots, it gives me solid comfort to disappoint them. The plain meal makes less work in preparation, in clearing away, and in the after clap, washing the dishes; and last, not least, in expense to the host to whose purse many guests, lavishly entertained, become a serious drain.—*Housekeeper.*

HINTS ON HOUSE BUILDING.

BY EDNA.

A "handy house," how good a thing it is, yet how few we see. If we could count the needless steps that must be taken to keep such a house in order, their number would appall us. They are needless because there should be no necessity for them; it is quite as easy to build a convenient house as an inconvenient one, to save steps as to compel the taking of them. It would not cost any more to have the cistern and well pumps in the kitchen, than out doors; and what a vast saving of labor it would be; certainly a very comfortable arrangement on cold and wet days. Then, if the wood shed adjoins the kitchen, and the wood box is so adjusted as to be filled from the outside, one's sweeping would be sensibly lessened.

A small cupboard set in the wall just above the stove, to hold boxes of spices, salt and tins, cups and spoons, and all the little necessities of cookery would be another saving of weary steps. Having the bedrooms on the ground floor, as far as possible, is a labor saving plan, and one very easily carried out. A closet off each room will prove a handy thing, conducive to order as well as time saving. But some one will say, house building is not in woman's province. True; but the planning should be hers by right, since she must spend the greatest part of her life there. Yet we women are so fond of a nice spare bedroom and parlor, we will sacrifice our comfort and health to obtain them, and when secured, shut them up like tombs, burying all our prettiest furniture and knick-knacks, only to be opened on rare occasions. This is neither right nor wise; let us have comfortable houses even at the expense of parlor and spare bedroom considering the comfort of ourselves and families of quite as much consequence as that of company.—*Household.*

CULTIVATING MUSHROOMS.

The *Chicago Times* gives some simple directions for securing a good growth of mushrooms. Barn cellars in which cattle have been kept during the winter may be utilized during other seasons of the year for growing mushrooms for home use or the market. The best soil for mushrooms is made by mixing equal parts of fresh horse manure and soil that contains no seeds of weeds. The material should lie in a heap till the manure has fermented, when the mass should be made quite firm by tramping or beating. Pieces of spawn about as large as a small egg should be imbedded in the earth, two inches below the surface and a foot apart. Ten days after planting the spawn the beds should be covered two inches thick with loam or other soft earth. The spawn, which is sold in the form of bricks, can be had of almost any seedsman and may be sent by mail. Mushroom beds should be at least eight inches thick, and for convenience in working and gathering should be about four feet wide. The best temperature for growing mushrooms is fifty degrees. The beds should have water sprinkled on them from time to time, as they become dry. Mushrooms are now extensively raised in England in coal mines, while in France they are grown in caves. They do best in places nearly devoid of light. A mine, cave, or cellar is well adapted to producing mushrooms, as the air is likely to be moist, and the temperature low and not subject to change.

CARE AND TREATMENT OF HANGING BASKETS.

Hanging baskets add so much to the adornment of our homes during the summer, that I am induced to give a few plain directions for their management. In the first place get them nicely filled with suitable plants, and, presuming such is the case, do not expose them all at once to the scorching sun and drying winds. Let an old newspaper, or piece of thin cloth be pinned around each, during the very hottest part of the day, removing it at night, which after a few days shading, may be discontinued entirely. The watering of baskets is a most important point and must be done effectually and as often as necessary. Be sure the water penetrates the whole, whether it is required once a day or once a week. This must be ascertained by the appearance of the plants, and as soon as there is the least sign of wilting let them be watered. Perhaps the best and surest way is to immerse the basket in a tub of water until

the air bubbles cease to rise; as long as the bubbles continue there are some spots still dry. Immersion is not necessary at every watering, but certainly once or twice a week. Some fertilizing agent must be applied at least twice a week, and the easiest applied and one of the most effectual is guano, in proportion of one teaspoonful to three gallons of water; this can be used for alternate watering with the immersions, and, I may say here, that for all liquid manuring of house plants there is nothing better than guano, used in proportion as given above. The plants in hanging baskets must be regulated and cared for, that is, the strongest growing ones must not be allowed to over run and choke the weaker ones. Take off the largest and those leaves showing any signs of decay. Pinch out the points of Coleus, Achyranthus, and other plants that are inclined to destroy the symmetry, or even take out a whole branch; remove altogether such plants that have done flowering for the season and which impede the growth of others. Urns, vases, and boxes, filled with plants, require nearly the same care and treatment, excepting that that they cannot be dipped in water; but a sharp pointed stick or thin rod of iron, thrust in the soil and reaching to the bottom in several places, by twining round and withdrawing will leave space for water to percolate through the whole.—*American Garden.*

HOW TO COOK OAT MEAL.—If possible soak the meal over night. A coffee-cup of oat meal will suffice for five or six persons for a breakfast dish. It is seldom cooked sufficiently. Let it cook an hour at least. Stir the cupful of meal gradually into boiling water; let it boil smartly at first, then set it back where it will not boil so fast. The surest way to avoid scorching is to cook it in a double kettle; then all the attention it requires is to keep water boiling in the kettle beneath. Do not forget to salt the water before putting in the oat meal—if neglected the porridge will be almost tasteless. A very appetizing and satisfying breakfast dish can be made from fried oat-meal. Cook it the day before, in the same manner as for mush, and pour it into a deep earthen dish to cool—the same as is used for moulding Indian mush for the same purpose. Have it thoroughly done, so thick as to be firm and dry when cold. Cut in thin slices, fry in butter and serve with syrup.

A CHEAP PAINT.—It is sometimes very desirable to obtain an inexpensive paint for out buildings and rough board fences, &c. The following method will furnish a paint as durable as most of that mixed with oil, but at a much less cost. Put into a barrel a half bushel of lime, and cover it with boiling water about five inches in depth and leave it to slake. When this has been effected, add enough water to give it the proper consistency; add also two pounds of zinc sulphate, one of common salt and half pound of alum. Colors may be added as desired; a rich cream tint is obtained by the addition of three pounds of yellow ochre; a pearl color by the addition of lamp black; Venetian red will impart a red shade, &c. The wash is to be applied, as soon as prepared, with a painter's brush.

BAKED MACARONI.—Use about half a pound of macaroni, break it up in pieces, put it in boiling water and stew gently for twenty minutes; salt it a little; drain well; have ready a buttered pudding dish; place a layer of the macaroni in the bottom, then cover with grated cheese and butter until all is used up; add a wine glass of cream or milk; bake covered for half an hour; then remove the cover and brown nicely; serve it in the bake dish.

BUTTER-MILK CHEESE.—You can make delicious little cheeses by warming up buttermilk until it is quite curdled, then straining it through a bag, mixing the curd with a little cream, butter and salt, then pressing it into a small basin or cup for a few hours. It is very nice for breakfast or lunch. The best scones, teacake and plain cake are made with buttermilk instead of sweet milk or water, using a small quantity of carbonate of soda.

White paint may be best cleaned with lukewarm water, having a teacup of whiting mixed in a bucket of water. Colored paint should be cleaned with lukewarm suds, made of mild hard soap. In both cases the work should be done briskly, rinsing in pure lukewarm water immediately, after the suds, and drying quickly. Strong soap, soda, or any alkali cleanses but injures the paint.