

THE HOUSEHOLD.

PLUCK AND PRAYER.

There wa'n't any use o' fretting,
 And I told Obadiah so,
 For ef we couldn't hold on to things,
 We'd jest got to let 'em go.
 There were lots of folks that'd suffer
 Along with the rest of us;
 An' it didn't seem to be worth our while
 To make such a drefle fuss.

To be sure, the barn was most empty,
 An' corn an' pertators sca'ce,
 An' not much of anything plenty an'
 cheap
 But water—an' apple-sass.
 But then—as I told Obadiah—
 It wan't any use to groan,
 For flesh and blood couldn't stan' it; and
 he
 Was nothing but skin an' bone.

But laws! ef you'd only heard him,
 At any hour of the night,
 A-prayin' out in that closet there
 'Twould have set you crazy quite,
 I patched the knees of those trousers
 With cloth that was no ways thin,
 But it seemed as ef the pieces were wore
 out
 As fast as I set 'em in.

To me he said mighty little
 Of the thorny way we trod,
 But at least a dozen times a day
 He talked it over with God.
 Down on his knees in that closet
 The most of his time he passed;
 For Obadiah knew how to pray
 Much better than how to fast.

But I am that way contrairy
 That ef things don't go jest right,
 I feel like rollin' my sleeves up high
 An' gittin' ready to fight.
 An' the giants I slew that winter
 I a'n't going to talk about;
 An' I didn't even complain to God
 Though I think that he found it out.

With the point of a cambric needle
 I druv the wolf from the door,
 For I knew that we needn't starve to
 death
 Or be lazy because we were poor.
 An' Obadiah he wondered,
 An' kept me patching his knees.
 An' thought it strange how the meal
 held out,
 An' stranger we didn't freeze.

But I said to myself in whispers,
 'God knows where his gift descends;
 An' 't isn't always that faith gets down
 As far as the fingers-ends.'
 An' I would not have any one reckon;
 My Obadiah a shirk;
 For some, you know, have the gift to
 pray,
 And other the gift to work.
 —Harper's Weekly.

INSTEAD OF A HOT WATER BAG.

An excellent substitute for a hot water bag, specially when needed for the comfort of cold feet in bed, is a large bottle filled with as hot water as the glass will stand, closed with a rubber stopper. A quart bottle will keep warm all night and be a source of great comfort to one having little vitality or poor circulation of the blood. Another convenience is to keep in the house bags made of stout cotton cloth, light weight duck or other tightly woven goods. It is a good plan to make these bags in assorted sizes. Fill them with clean sand. When needed for warming a bed or a sick person, put them in a moderate oven and let them get thoroughly heated. These sand bags will keep an even temperature for a long time. They can be adjusted to an aching back or side, used to pillow a neuralgic face or as a foot warmer.

DISH WASHING.

"I just feel 'called' to say something on this homely subject, for among the many mothers who read 'The Housekeeper,' there may be some like one I know. She is a neighbor of mine, and a good woman, too, but a very poor housekeeper. Some time since her baby was taken sick and, her husband being absent, she sent for me to stay with her a day or two.

After breakfast she told her little girl to 'do up' the dishes. I said that I would wash them. 'Oh, no,' replied she. 'Clara can wash them very well when she wants to but she does hate to.'

I felt sorry for the child, remembering how I, too, disliked dish washing when a child, so while the mother was getting the baby asleep I slipped out in the kitchen to help. I did not blame the poor little girl for being cross when sent into such a kitchen! Everything, it seemed to me, was dirty and out of place. The kettles and skillets were dry and cold, there was no dish pan, and the old rags used for dish cloth and towels were very much soiled.

Well, to make a long story short, I went to work and things were all cleaned up for once.

You may say, 'Oh! well, her baby was sick and she could not keep things in order.'

The child had only been sick a few hours, and then, I have been there so many times when they were all well and it was just the same. They are able to have things handy to use, too.

If you cannot wash things as you empty them, you can pour water in the kettles and place them on the back part of the stove, where they will keep warm until after dinner. If you can not buy toweling for drying dishes, hem flour sacks; they are very good and wash easily. A chain dish cloth or even a clam shell is very useful in cleaning kettles.

Make several thick holders and hang near the stove to save your hands and towels in lifting hot kettles and pans. If a ring off an old suspender is sewn on one corner, the holders are easily and quickly hung up in their places.

Keep plenty of soap to use while washing dishes. Have a good, large dish pan and one of some sort to drain the dishes in.

Have things as convenient as you can and see if your girls don't go to their work with a will.—Jessie Lynch in 'Housekeeper.'

THE MOTHER'S DUTY.

The 'Mother of Three' writes as follows to the 'Congregationalist':—'Speaking from experience, I can only say that mothers of young children surely deserve much consideration in view of the difficulties against which they struggle. I believe that I am a woman of more than average strength, endurance and cheerfulness, and the circumstances of my life are not unusually hard, yet there are times when my courage almost fails in meeting the everyday necessities of life. The truth is that a young mother, to whom children have come rapidly, and who has a young babe dependent upon her, has little reserve strength. In patience and wise self-management lie her only safety. Instead of setting up an arbitrary standard of excellence and driving herself up to it, with bitter self-scouring in case of failure, she should quietly take the measure of her own ability and arrange her work accordingly.

'Any considerate husband would prefer to forego his dessert rather than have his wife come to the table flushed and exhausted. It is better to buy even cheap ready-made clothing for the children than to sew vitality and nervous energy into endless seams and trimmings. It is actually best for baby to be left to the care of clumsy Bridget for an hour while mother gets a breath of the fresh air, which is so essential to his

well-being as well as her own; and one hour of companionship with a refreshed and invigorated mamma will be more helpful to the older children than the most unflinching attendance of one who is fagged and spiritless. In brief, I believe I have Mark Hopkins's authority for the paradox that the best mother is the one who takes the best care of herself.'

A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS.

A busy woman has compiled for her own use and gratification a book of quotations, which so far surpasses in cleverness and quantity anything of the kind that I have ever seen, that I was emboldened to ask her how she had managed to make such a collection.

'My dear,' she said, 'that represents the work of years, yet done so gradually that I have never missed the hours spent upon it. From the time that I was a girl I have made a habit of reading with a pencil and notebook at hand, and when anything impresses me as especially clever, I "make a note of it." Even in travelling I always have a tiny pencil and a sheet of paper in the depths of purse or bag. At any time when I have a few moments to spare at my desk, I jot down the matter collected in this great blank-book, and then it is mine forever. Although the books I have read in times past may not belong to me, the best, most pithy sayings in them can never be taken from me. To this volume I often go for amusement, cheer and consolation. It is an old friend, who has something to say to me to fit any mood in which I may find myself.—Harper's Weekly.'

HIS MOTHER'S PRAYER CLOSET.

A Christian man who had long been engaged in useful service tells of a visit to his old home. He was put to sleep in the spare room. He opened a closet door, and a scene was before him which brought a rush of tears to his eyes. An old chair stood there, and before it lay a cushion, in which were deep knee-prints. Evidently this was some one's closet of prayer. Instantly the truth flashed upon him. He was looking into the secret sanctuary of his beloved mother, where she had prayed all her children into the kingdom of Christ. What a holy place it was! What would be the result if every Christian home in the world had such a holy of holies, its old chair daily wet with tears of love, and its cushion deeply indented by suppliant knees!—J. R. Miller.

THE GERM CELL.

The germ cell of the nation is the home. Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, in 'The North American Review,' writes as follows, concerning the importance of our homes:—'Before all forms of government, all types of civilization, all advance in education, the relations of the husband and wife make the everlasting granite on which the whole world rests. Just so fast and just so far as these relations are what they ought to be, and what God intends they shall be, just so fast and just so far will society be uplifted—no faster, no farther. "How shall we purify public life?" is the great question of the hour. We can purify public life no faster than we purify the private life in the home, for the public life is only the public expression of the private life of a people. The advance of a nation comes only through the improvement of the homes of a nation. As the aggregate of these may be, so will the nation be. For it is in the home, conducted by the harmonious and right-minded husband and wife, that the real harmonizing and civilizing are carried forward.'

The same writer says that a drunken husband and father 'sends out into the world a hideous caricature of

the living God in the person of his own child, whose life stretches away farther than our imaginations can follow. It is the most serious and widespread evil of our time, the drunkenness of husbands, alike in high life and low life, and it portends the direst consequences to posterity. The woman who dares marry a libertine or a drunkard, with the hope of reforming him, or the expectation of finding happiness with him, ought to have a chance in a lunatic asylum, or a home for imbeciles.' The time to reform the man is several years before marriage.—Christian Guardian.

A STUDY IN SOCIAL ECONOMICS.

(By J. M. Skinner.)

Shortly before Christmas I was seated in a Battersea tram-car on my way to a meeting at the Rev. W. Scott's Baptist Tabernacle. Not having been to the Tabernacle before, I asked my neighbor, who appeared to be a bricklayer or stonemason, if he knew where it was. He replied: 'Yes, sir, it is a little further on,' and then asked: 'Is there a mission just now?' 'I am going to a temperance meeting,' was my reply, and as he seemed interested I ventured to ask if he were an abstainer. 'Yes, sir, I am,' he replied with a pleased look. 'How long have you been a teetotaler?' was my next query. 'Six weeks,' he said, his face beaming more than ever, which induced me to go on inquiring. 'Well, and how do you like it?' 'First rate, sir. I have got thirty-eight shillings to the good, and that has nothing to do with what the missus has got.' 'I am glad to hear it. It seems to suit you, and I suppose you are getting ready for a good holiday next summer?' 'Next summer, sir!' he said rather impatiently. 'I sha'n't wait so long as that. I am going to the north of England at Christmas to see my boy, who has been there some time.' Looking round and raising his hand he exclaimed, 'There, that's the Tabernacle, sir,' and we hurriedly said 'Good-night.'

'Six weeks' and 'thirty-eight shillings' kept ringing in my ears. Here was one honest, industrious artisan who had been giving the liquor-sellers at least six shillings and fourpence a week. His apparently excessive pleasure at having been six weeks an abstainer was explained by the thirty-eight shillings. Then I ruminated upon the doctrine promulgated by some of our new teachers when they say that workmen ought not to save, and that it is impossible by adopting habitual sobriety to remedy the social misery that abounds. 'Thirty-eight shillings in six weeks' is my reply to those who scout abstinence as a means of securing valuable economic changes. My unknown friend has solved for himself the problem of how to spread amongst its producers the wealth that is now amassed by the worst form of capitalists—the rich liquor-sellers.—Alliance News.

SELECTED RECIPES.

Corn Bread.—Take a cupful of granulated cornmeal, a cupful and a half of boiling milk, a tablespoonful of butter, a heaping teaspoonful of sugar, a level teaspoonful of salt, and two eggs. Mix together the meal, salt and sugar, scald with the boiling milk, add the butter, and when the mixture is sufficiently cool, stir in the yolks and whites of the eggs, beaten separately. Bake in loaves.

Soft Corn Bread.—Take one cupful of cornmeal, the whites of two eggs, a tablespoonful each of salt and sugar, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one cupful of boiled hominy or rice, and two cupfuls of milk. Scald the meal with a cupful of boiling water, add the hominy, milk and other ingredients, with a tablespoonful of melted butter, and bake in a pudding dish.