

At the Sign of the Maple

A DEPARTMENT MAINLY FOR WOMEN

Homilies of a Home Bird

By LILLIAN VAUX MacKINNON

On Borrowing and Lending

THESE are some compensations in the lot of an "only" child, however much the public may pity his condition. One of these is the undisputed right of ownership. Such a thing is unknown in a family of many. Loud have been the protests, raised from time immemorial, by the younger members of thrifty households against made down clothes, garments which have seen the light of other days, far away in the childhood of the eldest sister or brother. What "baby" of a family will not eagerly endorse my views when I affirm that it is a burning shame for any mother to invest in material so hopelessly durable that it stolidly refuses to show signs of wear, and submits to being cut over for each succeeding generation so that the hapless youngest can never aspire to appear in really new apparel, but must forever go decked with the left-overs of his elders and forerunners.

But greatly as this condition of affairs is to be lamented, there is another crying evil in family circles which should be even more vigorously denounced. It partakes of the nature of communism. A certain laxity in regard to individual rights, resultant, possibly, on freedom of intercourse, leads to the practical negation of ownership, and the curious result is seen of enforced community of interests and possessions. In common parlance the borrowing habit is an acknowledged nuisance in almost every family.

No one will deny, I think, that we are all apt to be a trifle selfish and perhaps unduly aware of our particular rights. Still, there is such a thing as private property, even within the family circle, and to one who recognizes this, nothing is more exasperating than the disregarding of it on the part of others. To find, on dressing for a concert, that your favourite necktie is dining out with your younger brother, or that your sister has fancied your scarf-pin for her lace waist and is even now sporting it next door, this, I say, is trying to anyone with a sense of personal pride. It is not so much the actual deprivation which concerns you, as the consciousness of being baffled in your creed of private rights and control of personal acquisitions, by one who chooses to ignore it. To be asked six times a day to lend something, is as nothing compared with the shock of finding it gone "unbeknownst" to you.

Away with the so-called "borrower," the snapper-up of unconsidered trifles, the Autolycus of the home! Let brotherly love continue. Let there be a glad sharing of one's possessions, a ready generosity with small personal belongings, but, appreciating the fact of our own property let us give full consideration to that which our brother is pleased to call his own. Let us do without the coveted thing

when the getting of it means taking it without the owner's knowledge.

On Passing Things at Table

AS a child I used to avoid sitting near the butter at table. It was unpleasant, I thought, to be interrupted by constant demands to "please pass." Selfish small person that I was, I wanted full time for imbibing, regardless of others' comfort.

We are but children of a larger growth in this. In no way can selfishness so quickly betray itself as in table manners, when one is off one's guard, in the shelter of the home. Show me the man who can never wait to pass the mustard and I will know him forthwith as an egoist. Show me one who anticipates the needs of his brother, offering the

man whose exertions cannot extend beyond the supplying of his own immediate wants. And it shows the day-dreamer whose fancied flights waft him no further than the steam from his own cup.

But your "in honour preferring one another" type of man is he who genially interposes his remarks on the weather with a cup of tea set at your place. Who finds occasion in taking salt to serve you first. Who sees when you are in sore need of sugar and unofficially supplies you. Such an one enjoys a continual feast, whether his be a dinner of herbs or a stalled ox.

On the Rising Bell

THE old adage about "getting out of the right side of the bed" has in it, like most absurdities, a germ of truth. It makes every difference to the conduct of the day which side of the bed is selected. In other words, how one is awakened in the morning.

To begin with the most barbarous method—the alarm clock. No more successful scheme for ruining the nervous system could be devised than this excruciatingly persistent *whir-r-r* in the grey dawn. To be suddenly stung into consciousness by a sharp bell and then exasperated for five minutes by its noise, is no guarantee for a sweet disposition throughout the day.

Almost equal in horror to the alarm clock is the rising bell. This offers one grain of solace, however—that the discomfort it causes is widespread. Misery loves company, especially in the morning, when the path of duty leads straight upward. And there is some compensation in knowing that the knell whose echoes are even now reverberating through the hall, has roused many a hot heart besides one's own.

But to be summoned to the day's duties by a rap on the door seems to me particularly offensive. Something so summary lurks within it, even if the tap be gentle, such a brisk "I've been up for hours" tattoo it is, beating in upon the sweet calm of sleep!

And save me from the voice that calls outside the door, "Seven o'clock! Time to rise!"—a triumphant note in every word, satisfaction that at last the sleepy head and soft pillow must part company. If there be anything more

trying to the patience than this, it is to be awakened by means of sundry domestic noises, such as shutting doors, opening windows, vigorous sweeping, everything calculated to make continued slumber comfortless or impossible.

The ideal awakening? Scorn on the idler who asks nothing better than to drift into consciousness naturally, and enjoy the sweet warmth of his bed in a dreamy stupor which refuses to be dispelled! Heaped-up invectives on the gourmand who requires the appearance of a dainty breakfast-tray to lure him back to life's reality, all on a radiant morning! But the twittering of birds in the foliage of the garden—the sweet kiss of a child upon your closed eyes—soft music quickening to martial time—or the resistless, health-given impulse to "do," to which the state of oblivion is always inherently

Shaking the Cordial Hand of Grandfather Bull



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More Than Young Ideas Can be Taught How to Shoot, it Seems; for Seasoned Ideas at Aldershot Appeared Not Wholly Unwilling to Heed the Remarks of the Merry Canadian School Ma'ams.

bread unasked, and I will say with conviction that such an one is at heart a prince of good fellows, a living illustration of the Golden Rule.

Unless it is to offer the excuse that thoughtlessness rather than selfishness is responsible for this lack of courtesy. A mere quibble! Thoughtlessness means a failure to think of others—that is, others effaced by self. And do not think to excuse my man on the ground that he is busy talking. For again I affirm that talking need not occupy one's eyes, unduly, unless, as I suspect, they are turned inward upon one's own weighty thoughts which are even now being proclaimed.

No, there is scarcely any failing rooted in selfishness which this table discipline does not disclose. It shows the gourmand who can spare not a minute from the contents of his plate. It shows the lazy