

HOUSEHOLD.

The Seasons of the Heart.

(Edward Wilbur Mason, in the 'Youth's Companion.')

If we be blithe and warm at heart,
If we be sound and pure within,
No sorrow shall abide with us
Longer than dwells the sin;

But if our heart be void and cold,
Be sure no good will live therein,
But sorrow for the sorrow's sake,
And sin because of sin;

The Reform of Thomas.

Mrs. Niblick was skilled in a kind of marital alchemy, an art possessed by a few of her sex, by which Niblick's defects were converted into something like virtues.

'Perhaps I should say nothing at all, my dear,' she said, 'but my motherly affection for Thomas doesn't blind me to his faults, and there's no doubt about it he's the most disorderly of men.'

The bride looked thoughtful. 'I'm glad you told me,' she said. 'I hadn't noticed that he was careless.'

'He'll soon show it,' said the mother. Shortly after Niblick's carelessness began to manifest itself. He came in one evening and left his hat on the dining-room table.

'Hello! What's my hat doing there?' 'I was wondering.'

'I should think that girl would know enough to hang a man's hat up where it belongs!'

'I told her never to disturb any of your personal belongings, dear. Didn't you want it there?'

'I meant to hang it up on the hall rack as I came in.'

'That does seem rather more suitable for it, doesn't it?'

Niblick laughed and hung up his hat. But when he changed his linen that evening to go out he tossed what he had discarded on the floor of his dressing room.

'Certainly it has,' said Mrs. Niblick. 'Oh, is that why you thought so? How absurd! Have you never seen that hamper in the closet? That's for soiled clothes, dear.'

Niblick picked up his things and threw them into the hamper.

After that a cigar stub remained a fixture on the library clock for two weeks before Niblick removed it. Meantime articles were accumulating on all sides—newspaper clippings, burned matches, torn envelopes, golf sticks, and so on.

'There's a division in your closet for your smoking-jacket,' said Mrs. Niblick, 'but if you prefer to hang it on a door-knob I've nothing to say.'

Niblick immediately owned that he was an untidy brute. But why haven't you spoken to me about these things? I just forget, you know.'

'You'll learn to remember, perhaps. You are systematic enough at your office.' 'I have to be,' said Niblick, ingenuously. 'As for speaking to you,' said Mrs. Niblick, 'your mother tried that for a number of years, I understand. But don't let that worry you, dear. You shall put your things exactly where you please. Only no one will pick them up after you.'

About Play

The English people are a home game-playing people, and Americans might catch a good hint or two from them on this point. Is it not true that in the administration of the average American home—we emphasize average for the exceptions' sake—'every man for himself' is the ruling principle.

Fathers and mothers need to look into this matter of play with much seriousness. If father himself be one of those who must needs turn to playthings for his evening's relaxation, then mother and sister must shoulder the responsibility, for mark you, the child who plays, be he eight years old or forty-eight, is also a child in this, that he seeks a 'play-fellow.'

If mothers and sisters would learn to amuse, by games, music, reading aloud, and other forms of unselfish amusement, many of the child-men would never dream of going to the home's arch enemy for their play—a real necessity of their nature.

We have in mind at this writing a woman of serious, self-reliant, mature mind, who through all the years of wifehood and motherhood has never let her husband and son find out how irksome the recurrent chess, bagatelle, and backgammon boards have been to her. They were her men-children. If they had not played at home they would have played elsewhere, and one of them began life with a tendency to inebriety.

Let no one dream that we claim for an instant that an outbreaking of games and play will empty saloons. The saloon catches men by more than one bait and through more than one need and weakness and deception. But we do claim that the loneliness of many a play-hungry individual has been a factor in drawing him to look through the gay saloon window with the later catastrophe of his complete enthrallment, and that this phase of temperance work is not to be despised while men are born with minds that never wholly outgrow the desire to play.

Selected Recipes.

Berry Muffins.—Any good recipe can be used for berry muffins, but the batter should be made somewhat thicker than usual or the fruit

will be apt to sink. One cupful of fruit to three of flour is the usual allowance. Fig Cake.—Wash and chop two pounds of pulled figs. Beat half a pound of butter to a cream; add the same weight of sugar; beat again and add five eggs well beaten, without separating. Dust the fruit with half a cupful of flour. Add half a cupful of grape juice, the juice of an orange, and half a nutmeg, grated, to the sugar mixture; mix, add one pint of flour; beat, and then stir in the fruit. Bake in a five-pound fruit cake pan, in a moderate oven, for four hours.

Quick Baked Potatoes.—If it is necessary to bake potatoes in a hurry, the process may be considerably shortened by putting them first in boiling salted water for ten minutes; they are then taken out and put into the oven and will bake in a very short time. The object is to heat them through quickly, this process being slowly accomplished if left to the oven alone.—'Green's Fruit-Grower.'

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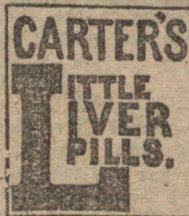
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