

THE HOUSEHOLD.

MARTHA.

"The Master comes to-day." Like a sweet song  
The words made music in the loving heart  
Of the glad woman who was honored much  
Above the daughters of Jerusalem,  
Since Christ would be her guest. What could  
she do  
For Him whom her soul loved? How show her  
sense  
Of His great condescension? And how prove  
Her grateful adoration? "They who love  
Must likewise serve," she said; and of her best  
This guest was more than worthy. So all day,  
With busy eagerness, she toiled at home  
To make the house more meet for Him to see.  
For when He rested in the pleasant rooms,  
And knew the fragrance of the fresh-culled  
flowers,  
And took the food her own hands had prepared,  
Then the dear Master would be pleased with her,  
And read the story of His handmaid's love,  
And say, perhaps, the word or two of praise  
For which her heart was thirsting.

The swift hours  
Were not half long enough for Martha's need,  
There was so much to do! With trembling  
haste,  
And words that urged her household to all tasks,  
She wrought and did not stay. And hour by  
hour  
The eyes, that looked so keenly for a fault  
Among the home-arrangements, grew to be  
Too bright for peace and quietness. Her cheeks  
Were hot and fevered; and the throbbing head,  
So anxious lest some thing should be forgotten,  
Pain would have sought the rest that might not  
be,  
And would not if it might while aught remained  
To do for Jesus?

By her sister's side  
Working serenely, with a tranquil face,  
Was Mary, singing snatches of glad song  
The while she worked, and in her eyes  
A sweet expectancy, as if she heard  
His step along the pathways of the world,  
And listened for the near approach of Him  
Who was her Lord and Saviour. "Soon He  
comes,"  
She whispered to herself.

"Yes, all too soon,  
For we shall not be ready," angrily  
Her sister said. Martha was getting tired,  
And she was vexed and tried by Mary's lack  
Of active zeal for Jesus.

Mary laughed  
In her glad joy. "He could not come too soon;  
And, sister, can it matter unto Him  
Whose own the world is, if our little room  
Miss here and there a touch to make it fair?  
He knows how we have longed to hear His voice,  
And we can please Him better by our love  
Than by our ministries."

"Love is not real,"  
Deemed Martha, "that, content to spend itself  
In looks and words, gives not its services  
Even to utter weariness."

But Mary cried:  
"O, Martha, He is come!" And all her face  
Was lighted with the joy that filled her heart  
As she went forth to meet Him. Ah! His stay  
Could be but short. Not yet had come the time  
When loyal hearts might have as much of Him  
In fellowship of spirit as they would;  
And not a moment of the precious hour  
Would Mary lose; but sat beside His feet,  
And with her reverent eyes she sought His face,  
And with true meekness took into her soul  
His every word.

Martha was still at work,  
Cumbered, distracted by a host of things,  
She had no leisure to enjoy and learn  
As Mary had, who sat in idleness,  
When so much needed doing! Easier far  
The part she chose, to sit and talk to Him  
And leave the self-denying part of work  
To over-task her sister! Did she think  
That Jesus would not see the greater love  
Of her who toiled amid the heat for Him,  
And thought no trouble great for His dear sake?  
Ah! He would understand her! And a sneer  
Settled on Martha's lips. For, presently,  
Would not the Master send the idle one  
Back to her duty with a sharp rebuke  
That well might bring the tears to Mary's eyes?  
And would He not praise Martha's vigilance,  
And all she did for Him?

And yet, and yet—  
The Master did not speak! Upon His face  
There shone the light which was not always there,  
The light of joy that answered evermore  
To human love and trust; but faded out  
When carelessness or hatred forced from Him  
The cry of pain—"Ye will not come to Me."  
He, looking down at Mary, seemed to give  
His silent approbation to her love,  
And Martha seeing it, and seeing, too,  
Her sister's gladness, could not bear it all,  
But went to Jesus, petulant, and full  
Of vexed impatience.

"Lord, dost thou not care  
That Mary leaves me thus to serve alone?  
Bid her, therefore, to help me."

Jesus turned  
His loving eyes upon the worried face,  
And said in gentle tones of kind rebuke:  
"Oh, Martha, Martha! anxious, troubled thou  
About the many things; but only one  
Is needful; Mary chooses that good part  
Which none shall take away from her."

And so  
For Martha and for all the Master spoke

His word of warning! Even service given  
In heat and worry is not what He asks;  
But the glad heart that loves to seek His face  
And cares to talk with Him, has chosen that  
Which is the best, and gives Him greatest joy.  
—Marianne Furningham, in *Christian World*.

TO MY IRRITABLE SISTER—AN  
OPEN LETTER.

BY MRS. M. E. SANGSTER.

Yes, my dear fellow-housekeeper, I know  
all about it from experience. I know the  
eternal vigilance which is alone the price of  
decent cleanliness. I have fought the in-  
cessant battle with dust, and have envied  
those notable matrons whose windows are  
always brightly polished, whose floors never  
show speck or fluff, whose vestibules are im-  
maculate, and whose tables are not only  
abundantly provided, but invariably daintily  
served. I knew how beautiful, in the read-  
ing, is the story of this woman or that,  
whose affairs move with no audible jar, and  
no visible friction. And I am aware, too,  
that it is not easy, in actual practice, to go  
through an ordinary domestic week, with  
its multifarious activities, and feel neither jar  
nor friction. The ideal superlative tran-  
scends the positive actual with many of us,  
and the prettier our homes are, the harder  
it is, alas! to take the proper and exquisite  
care which our very luxuries and conveni-  
ences demand.

It came to me, the other day, as I sat in  
my chamber, and thought of your annoy-  
ances and my own, that perhaps the most  
practical way of conquering the tendency to  
irritability of which you complain, and  
which I deplore, is resolutely to refuse it ex-  
pression. We are not always able to con-  
trol the impetuous rush of emotion, but we  
can repress the hasty speech and the severe  
frown. We can be silent, in the first flush  
of injured feeling, and refrain from the  
sharp word, the querulous outcry, and the  
indignant burst, of which we are sure to re-  
pent. Have we not repented over and over  
of having spoken impatiently, when to do  
so did no good, in fact did but confuse child  
or servant, or vex the heart of our friend?

Apart from the repression of resentment,  
in look or word, we may do much toward  
the cultivation of a gentle and not easily  
perturbed temper, by using habitually a  
gentle quietude of tone. Shall I ever for-  
get my friend, the sweet mistress of a Vir-  
ginia manse, her health fragile, her family  
large, her house overflowing with guests,  
and her hands with cares, while the best ser-  
vice at her command was both imperfect  
and uncertain? Her presence in the book-  
lined study was a benediction as we gath-  
ered for family prayers, or evening chat,  
nor, under any provocation, was the sweet  
voice ever raised. So tranquil, so unhur-  
ried, when I am wearied the remembrance  
of her gentleness rests and soothes me still.

Very precious to my heart is Bonar's  
hymn:

"Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,  
Soft resting on thy breast,  
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,  
And bid my spirit rest.

"Calm in the hour of buoyant health,  
Calm in my hour of pain;  
Calm in my poverty or wealth,  
Calm in my loss or gain."

When we have exhausted all our prescrip-  
tions, and tried all our remedies, dear, easily  
irritated sister, the one unfailing panacea  
awaits us. The leaves of the tree of life are  
forever for the healing of the nations. But  
we are often so slow to avail ourselves of  
the peace we might have for the asking; we  
so often buy everything else before we go  
to Him who never fails us when we carry  
our wants to his feet.

I think we instinctively run to Him in  
the time of calamity or disaster. Then we  
cannot help it. The impulse dominates us,  
and as the hurt child cries out for the  
mother-comfort, we fly to our heavenly  
Friend. But, the children are naughty, the  
chimney smokes, there are business worries,  
the servant leaves suddenly, the dinner is  
spoiled through somebody's carelessness, the  
baby is teething, and we are worn out, and  
we call all these little things; and think we  
must bear them alone. They are the very  
things in which the Lord is waiting to be  
our gracious helper, if we will only carry  
them straight to Him, to "drop the burden  
at his feet, and bear a song away."

I have addressed this bit of talk to you,  
my irritable, my discouraged, my over-  
wrought sister. You are irritable, because  
you are overwrought, and your discouragement  
springs from the same reason. I do

not know your name, but God knows it, for  
is it not written in the Lamb's book of life?  
Let us pray for each other, and let us take  
care to rule our spirits if we can, lest haply  
we be so unfortunate as to offend one of his  
little ones by our unkindness or sinful ex-  
asperation.—*Interior*.

IT COSTS SOMETHING.

"Tell you what, old fellow! It costs  
something to get married!"  
"Yes, indeed, and to keep a wife costs,  
too! I shall remain single!"

The growing extravagance of social life,  
the amount it takes for woman's dress in  
these days, the cost of housekeeping and the  
numberless calls upon the purse undoubt-  
edly deter some young men from marriage.  
They have their salaries—they know just  
how far they will go. If they hardly suffice  
for themselves, with the luxurious habits  
that are as much necessities to them as the  
young girl's furbelows and fripperies to her,  
how would they be able to supply the needs  
of two. So they flutter about at evening  
parties, attend on the ladies as escort when  
concert or lecture makes escort duty pleasant  
but take care, as they phrase it, not to get  
entangled with anyone who has not wealth  
of her own or in prospect. In plain words,  
they waste their youth and strength, suffer  
their hearts to grow cold and cynical because  
they do not wish to incur any self-denial,  
while they do true womanhood the disre-  
spect of thinking that it prizes more highly  
ornament and jewellery than faithful affec-  
tion and protecting care.

The fact is, that girls do not so greatly  
desire show and display as they seem to, but,  
where their parents are established in a  
certain rank of life, they are trained to re-  
gard many little things as part and parcel of  
existence, which they would readily lay aside  
if once a strong, noble sentiment of love  
came into their souls. "Where the true  
love has once bolted the door, the false love  
serenades in vain under the window. And  
the shams of life, the veneering, the mere  
outside gew-gaws and trinkets are nothing,  
absolutely nothing, to a sweet, modest, fresh-  
hearted girl, in comparison with her regard  
for her lover if he have the manliness to  
speak out and let her know it. The women  
are few and far between who do not glory  
in being helps and not hinderances to the  
men they have chosen as life companions, if  
they only know fully and freely the circum-  
stances and exigencies of the position.—  
*Christian Intelligencer*.

THE PUNISHMENT LEDGER.

This is about the most remarkable title that I  
have seen in some time. It heads an article  
on the study of discipline for children. I  
cannot do better than copy a paragraph:

"Perhaps the following plan, which I  
adopted experimentally some time ago, may  
commend itself to some parents, even  
though I have no wonderful results to offer.  
In an old account book I have a few pages  
devoted to each of my children; in the part  
devoted to each child I note the offence under  
its proper date, the punishment adopted, or  
punishments if the first has not proved  
sufficient, and the results. For instance, on  
such a day I find that Lilly, aged four, got  
at the shoe-blacking bottle, soiled her own  
hands and the baby's frock. Punishment:  
no cake at luncheon. Tears, but no expres-  
sions of remorse. Twelve days after,  
according to the ledger, Lilly tried the  
polish-bottle again; this time she was com-  
pelled to wash her own hands until the last  
vestige of blacking had disappeared; it took  
her half an hour, and there is no record of  
a repetition of the offence. Turning to an-  
other page, I find that with Claire, aged two,  
the only remedy for naughtiness, until  
within a fortnight, has been a gentle whip-  
ping; she persisted in poking her fingers  
into the fly-wheel of the sewing-machine,  
and in getting them jammed in bureau  
drawers. Such mishaps as she met with  
seemed only to encourage her, and the only  
efficacious remedy noted is 'whipped'; after  
which there is a blank in the record for  
several days. Since I have begun to write  
this paper, however, Claire was caught pok-  
ing bits of paper through the fire-screen in  
order to watch them burn. Her nurse found  
that the warning, 'No, no! no!' was not  
sufficient, and even whipping failed to stop  
it. So I put her fingers so near the hot  
coals that it was decidedly painful. That  
was some days ago, and now when Miss  
Claire finds a bit of paper she may look  
longingly at the fire, but before she gets

there she stops and herself exclaims, 'No,  
no! no!' It is not necessary to go further  
into this idea. The earlier we begin to  
classify punishments and their results the  
better."

The subject is one that should call for  
earnest thoughtfulness on the part of pa-  
rents. In the spirit of Procrustes the  
Stretcher, we may attempt to enforce one  
kind of punishment on all kinds of chil-  
dren, but the result will be disastrous.—*N.  
Y. Observer*.

A QUEER SHAPED LUMP.

A young mother while dressing a very  
young child, a short time ago, said, rather  
impatiently—

"You are such a queer shaped little lump  
of a thing, it is impossible to make anything  
fit you."

The lips of the child quivered, and look-  
ing up with tears in its eyes, it said, in a de-  
precating tone, "God made me."

The mother was rebuked, and the "little  
lump" was kissed a dozen times.

How many women there are who seem to  
forget that God made the human form, and  
that he had correct ideas of its true propor-  
tions. They are not at all willing to grow  
after the pattern which the Lord ordained.  
They cramp their feet, compress their waists,  
distort their bodies, ruin their health, and cut  
short their lives.

The apostle Paul has taught us that our  
bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost; and  
who is there that has the presumption to  
cramp and distort and injure forms which  
God has made to be his temples for the in-  
dwelling of his Spirit? When once the  
sacredness of the human body is understood,  
a Christian woman will no more distort her  
form and ruin her health by yielding to the  
dictates of pride and fashion, than she would  
curse, or swear, or get drunk.

How many poor women are to-day  
mouldering in the grave, who might have  
been in the enjoyment of health and strength  
and happiness, had they thoroughly realized  
the truth, stated by this little child. "God  
made me," and tried to live in accordance  
with the law and will of him who formed  
man in his own image.—*Exchange*.

LET THE BOYS hang up their own hats and  
coats and put away their bats, balls, tennis  
rackets, school-books, etc. If they drop  
them in the hall or on the parlor floor, tell  
them, good-naturedly, that mother, nor  
sister, nor maid, is going to put them in their  
places. They are dear good fellows, and you  
don't mind doing it one bit; indeed you  
rather like it. But you must deny your-  
selves this pleasure. Habits are masters.  
You don't want your brother to live all his  
life under the dominion of disorderly habits.  
You and your mother ought to cure him.

PATIENCE A GREAT HELP.—A lady who  
had been prostrated by a serious accident  
underwent a critical surgical operation.  
After it was over she inquired of the sur-  
geon how long she should have to remain  
in bed. "Only one day at a time," he  
cheerfully responded. The thought had a  
soothing influence upon her, and as she gave  
utterance to it from day to day, a feeling of  
resignation was engendered which did much  
to neutralize the effect of months of weary  
confinement to bed. Heroic effort often re-  
stores the mind to a healthy balance, but  
patience, in the true meaning of the word,  
is the best aid to recovery in surgical cases.

PUZZLES.

ACROSTIC.

1. A family noted for temperance principles.
  2. A priest.
  3. A word signifying light or fire.
  4. A daughter of Herod Agrippa.
  5. A word meaning to reverberate.
  6. One healed of disease.
- The initials and finals give the names of two patriarchs.

BIBLICAL WORD SQUARE.

A Sear, what a servant was to his master, a  
fruit, a prince.

MISSING MOUNTAINS.

1. If I ever visit foreign parts.  
I should like to see the famous—.
2. If I wished for scenery wild and rural  
Of course I'd seek it in the—.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN LAST NUMBER.

1. Hit, wit, bit, sit, pit, lit, kit.
2. Instep.
3. France.