

HOUSEHOLD.

Parlor Meetings.

Miss Willard writes to the 'Union Signal,' urging the importance of using the parlor for temperance work. She says:—

These are the days when the parlor or drawing-room has become the centre of attraction for lectures, entertainments, concerts and the like. There is an enjoyable and home-like atmosphere amid the surroundings that women naturally draw around themselves, which cannot be equalled in a church vestry or any other outside rendezvous. The tendency is one to be encouraged, and indicates that the tidal wave that threatened to wash the home out into the world, has begun to recede. It is, perhaps, the best feature of the White Ribbon movement that it has steadily sought to lead women toward home, love and loyalty, rather than away from these centres of power and peace. For one, I have never sought to induce a young mother, surrounded by her little ones and home cares, to neglect a single duty there for anything that she could do in any outside society. Invariably, when such women have expressed their grief at not being able to work with us, I have said: 'Do not be restive, my dear, in this most significant and hallowed period of your life. No one is doing more for her native land and for humanity than she who with loyal tenderness fulfils the duties of a wife and mother. Your time to work with us will be later, when the little birds are fledged and flown, and you will come forth to the larger service for which your experiences have prepared you, and will find that a life-work lasts a life-time, and the "mothering" of your own has but prepared you to mother the homeless ones in the great outside world.'

All this is preliminary to an exhortation that I have long wished to give to our local unions, viz., it is the parlor meeting which takes a knowledge of our work and interest in it most directly into the home.

If I could visit every local union I would say: Make your most attractive, tactful, ingenious-minded woman superintendent of parlor meetings. Do not have them stilted and mechanical, but bring in a chorus of children to sing the 'marching songs,' enlist the young women to furnish an entertainment, pass around light refreshments and break up for a brief space at the close into groups for social conversation. As a matter of course, the opening exercises will be singing and prayer, our Responsive Readings being especially appropriate, to parlor meetings. We have made them so cheap that they can be placed in every hand, and the ladies asked to take them home, where they may pass under the eyes of 'the man of the house'—which will be an excellent thing.

System Gives Time.

Housework, like other kinds of business, will be better accomplished by having regular times and ways for doing things, than by working at haphazard. It is best to have certain days for washing, ironing, baking, mending, sweeping, etc. Yet none of these days should be so crowded with work, that there will not be time for an hour's reading. Also, there should be some time for making and receiving calls, going to town and company.

If the housekeeper's work includes family sewing, gardening, and, with some helping with the chores outdoors, there will not be much chance for visiting in the summer season, but housework could oftener be made easier than it is. Take washday. The work need not be done in the old-fashioned way in order to be well done. Many who do their own work, or are willing to make the work easier for hired help, when the washing is large, lighten the labor of rubbing and wringing very much by putting into each boiler of suds a few spoonfuls of kerosene, a little experimenting determines the right quantity. If there are three or four different boilings, and the first consists of fine shirts, skirts, etc., the shirtbands and edges of skirts, etc., may need previous soaking and rubbing but the sheets and pillowcases can usually be put right into the suds dry, having first renewed the water, soap and kerosene, if necessary. While the first two boilings are in progress, the third and fourth can be soaked and slightly rubbed, when needed. Soap and kerosene together are very cleansing, and the greater part of the

clothes may be put into the boiling suds while dry. The colored cotton clothes, which will not be injured by fading, may be served in the same manner. In this way the washing will be finished early in the day, and time left for clearing up and preparing a good dinner, instead of using odds and ends, with the washing dragging round into the afternoon. There is also a better chance for the clothes to dry. One should not try to do the ironing in the afternoon, but should feel that after the dinner work is done the afternoon ought to be taken for reading, or other rest, until tea time, with perhaps sorting the clothes for ironing, placing stockings and clothes which are to be mended in the mending basket, and not sprinkling those which will mend as well without it.

Take Tuesday for ironing. It is desirable to begin the day early. If fine shirts are laundered at home, they may be restarched in cold starch, and left while one is ironing other things. Knitted underwear need not be ironed, nor much time spent on sheets or night dresses that are going to be used right away. The time saved from ironing will accomplish the mending, except the stockings, and the clothes can be put away the same day. Where there are little girls, who are trained, as all children should be, to be helpful, towels, handkerchiefs, and aprons will do for practice.

In large families it is often necessary to bake bread every other day, but if twice a week will answer, it might be done on Wednesdays and Saturdays. As hygiene is more observed than formerly, fruit is often substituted for pastry, and here is a gain in time, health, and expense. It is not necessary to have a great variety at ordinary meals, but a good garden, with things in season, will enable one to vary the bill of fare from day to day. If the baking has not been elaborate, a part of the day might be given to sewing, also on Thursday, if there is much sewing to be done. Young girls should have lessons in this art as soon as possible. It will not interfere with school work, or healthful play, but should go with it. It will help them as well as mother.

Sweeping and dusting for Friday. We often hear about carpets being unhealthy owing to the dust they collect and diffuse through the air in sweeping, and are discarded by some who consequently have less dusting to do, but more mopping or wiping up of floors. A large share of the work in sweeping, sometimes, is picking up and putting away things after careless people. This may be dispensed with by making it a rule of the family that each member put everything used into its proper place. Let this be the rule even in families even where the children are all boys.

Enough baking should be done on Saturday to last over the next washday, at least, and preparation be made for Sunday.

Besides the week's work, there is house-cleaning, canning, and unforeseen work, from sickness, company, etc., but system and planning will help.—'Housekeeper.'

Selected Recipes.

Fish Fritters.—Beat two eggs without separating, add to them one gill of milk; now add to this a half to a pound of shredded codfish and sufficient flour (about two-thirds of a cup) to make a batter that will drop nicely from the spoon; add one-fourth teaspoon of pepper and one teaspoonful of baking powder. Mix, drop into smoking hot fat by teaspoonful. These are very nice for summer's lunch, served with sliced cucumbers or cucumber sauce.

Ham Salad.—Cut fine pieces of boiled ham. Make a dressing as follows: To one half-cup of melted butter add two well beaten eggs, one half-pint of vinegar, pepper and salt to taste, dessert spoonful of sugar and same of mustard. Mix smooth and boil until it thickens to the consistency of cream, and pour on the ham. If desired, mix in chopped celery.

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JOHN DOUGALL & SON,
Publishers, Montreal.

THE 'NORTHERN MESSENGER' is printed and published every week at the 'Witness' Building, at the corner of Craig and St. Peter streets in the city of Montreal, by John Redpath Dougall, of Montreal.

All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son,' and all letters to the editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'