

Wives * and * Daughters

The Housekeeper's Pet Virtue.

(Written specially for these columns.)

A writer in the Welland Tribune inveighs against the luxury of super-cleanliness, and the unreasonableness of those who will maintain it no matter at what cost of time, money, convenience and comfort. "To live in a clean house," he says, "especially if it is a large one, is a very serious expense. To have windows washed once a week, and carpets swept and rugs shaken, and paint washed now and then, and ceilings whitened once a year, and to have clean table linen and bright silver, are all luxuries that eat up the incomes of families. It does not do a family any real good to be so desperately clean." But what are we to do about it? Are we to consent to live in a dirty small house or a dirty large one, simply because to keep such houses clean is a serious expense? Are windows to go unwashed, and carpets unswept, and rugs unshaken, and paint uncleared, merely because to maintain them in a respectable condition is destructive of soap and time? As to saying that it doesn't do a family any real good to be so desperately clean, anyone can see that that is a great mistake. There is more self-respect and self-approval and self-satisfaction and superiority to neighbors, and the Lord-we-thank-thee-that-we-are-not-as-other-men-are spirit in desperately clean families than in all the other kinds of self-righteous people under the sun. And who shall say that self-complacency is not productive of happiness, and that happiness is not a "real good"?

Speaking seriously, it is to be supposed that men do not want their wives and daughters to be desperately clean, nor do they wish them to be dirty. What they really desire is that they should be moderately clean. The moderately clean housekeeper will only half sweep her carpets, and she will "swipe" the dust off the furniture instead of wiping it off. The windows will be middling, the paint passable, the stoves just so-so. Her husband never puts on a clean shirt; he puts on a half clean one, or a moderately clean one instead. The guest in her house sleeps or attempts to sleep between sheets which have felt the pressure of other forms—semi-clean forms—since they mingled in the wholesome society of the wash tub. He then partially cleanses his face and hands in a dusty wash bowl, in water that is not very dirty, wipes them in a towel that no one could accuse of being desperately clean, and brushes the hair above his half clean face before a fly-specked mirror. Descending to the breakfast table he finds that the table-linen is not superfluously clean; neither are the dishes, as an occasional sticky cup or spoon testifies; neither are the various articles of food, for the housekeeper who is moderately clean in her parlor is moderately clean in her pantry; in short she lets her moderation be known in all things.

Probably the most violent opponent of fastidious neatness would admit that motives of self-respect are sufficient to compel one to be clean in one's person, clean in one's dress, and clean in one's food, but that in other branches of housekeeping it is not necessary to be so scrupulous. But where is the line to be drawn? Clean food that is cooked on a dirty stove in an unclean kitchen, and served on a half clean table-cloth, rouses suspicions that will not be allayed. We are judged by the company we keep. The milk that is kept in a clean pan or an unclean shelf will be silent regarding the pan, but it will tell tales of the shelf. The butter that resides in a cellar that is not absolutely clean will itself be contaminated by its surroundings. No article of food can remain long uninfected by an impure environment. As to cleanliness of person and dress, how can they possibly be maintained when every object handled or leaned against is covered with dust?

An ill-kept house is not only an offense to the eye, and a reproach to the moral nature, but it is also a menace to health. Dirt is a synonym of disease. The unswept carpet and unshaken rug would not be permitted in a sick room, and they are only a little less injurious in a well room. The stuffy or musty odors that arise from undisturbed corners are as deleterious as they are offensive. A house is a sort of outside garment, and if it is not kept in good condition it affects the health as well as the nerves of its wearer.

The Tribune writer goes on to say: "It is generally conceded that if the man in the house has a fair chance he will make himself comfortable. His hair may not be exceptionally neat, nor particularly pretty, but it will be a good place to sit down in, and a good place to work in. Does he ever complain that it is not kept clean enough? No, never. When he grumbles it is because the carpet has been taken up, and all the books turned out." But in this matter society judges the sex very differently. Let a man be careless in his habits, and not particularly clean in his surroundings, and it is thought no worse than if he were color blind, or lacked an ear for music. Let a woman be slovenly and not very clean, and she is mourned over by her friends

and denounced by her acquaintances. No personal gift or charm or accomplishment that she may possess will make amends for this unpardonable defect. It is true that purity of life and thought may exist in a woman along with impure outward surroundings, but it is generally believed that in such circumstances they lead a precarious existence.

With morality and a love of thoroughness and healthfulness and cleanliness on her side it is probable that women will always be accused of too slavish a fidelity to the broom and scrubbing brush. It means a great deal of unpleasant hard work, but the results of leaving that work undone are too awful to be faced. The man who grumbles at being rooted out of his lair at housecleaning time is singularly inconsistent. Why did he not marry some girl as easy-going as himself, instead of being so careful to pick out a good housekeeper and a good manager? Untidy women frequently marry, but nobody envies their husbands, and the husbands themselves have been known to grumble.

But the average woman if she is given a chance will make herself comfortable, but her idea of comfort is to have everything about her as far as possible daintily fresh and fragrantly clean.

The Hour of Need—The Hour of Power.

"On Duty" in Union Signal gives a rich fragment, hitherto unpublished, from the Bible reading which Mrs. Andrew gave at the opening of our last world's convention. The lesson was upon Jacob's wrestling with the angels. Mrs. Andrew continued: "Mr. Moody said years ago, 'God cannot make use of a man until he gets to the end of himself, and the sooner he comes to it the better, where he can say, I know my helplessness; for that is the time when the divine power works in man.' I remember hearing Josephine Butler say in England, 'The hour of our utter helplessness and the consciousness of that utter helplessness is the very hour of God's power in the soul.' I remember such an hour in India, when Dr. Bushnell and I had closed our doors and shut ourselves up with God, and, oh, the realization of utter helplessness. We had had a month in which we had accomplished nothing; the great secret system seemed impenetrable. We realized that no human power would ever open those closed gates, but we waited upon God, and as the time wore on, I remember how that sense of utter helplessness increased upon me, my soul bowed itself more and more deeply at the feet of divine omnipotence, and then there came light, God could make himself heard in the utter silence of our souls before him. And so I ask you this morning, has the angel touched you and have you realized that your strength is gone before God? Then that is the hour that brings power. Don't be troubled if you have a deep sense of your helplessness, but wait upon God until you hear the heavenly voice, and then there will be no mistakes and no difficulty about your future actions. It was after this that the angel said to him, 'Thou hast prevailed with man and with God, and henceforth he should bear a new name; he should be called Israel, a prince among the princes of the earth.' And then Jacob said: 'I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.' The sun rose upon him."

Realizing the Folly of It.

"The one thing that I have pinned in my husband for this winter, only I don't wear a hat," laughed a woman a day or two ago, "is moderation."

Then she went on more soberly, says the New York Times: "Five years ago I was well and strong. I got caught, however, in the vortex of occupation and excitement in which most of the women I know are struggling and it has almost killed me. I was busy from morning until night. I joined club after club until I counted membership in five. My correspondence grew to such proportions I really needed a secretary. I went everywhere possible—to lectures, meetings of various sorts, luncheons, teas, and different social festivities—belonged to several charitable organizations, was a more or less active church worker, looked after my husband and family (I thought), and, in fact, pursued the same rounds that hundreds of other women are pursuing who are not bread-winners on the one hand or votaries of fashion and society on the other."

"And pretty soon the pace began to tell upon me. I lost flesh and became careworn. I grew nervous and irritable at home until the utterance among the children, 'Mamma's tired,' became a respectful way of intimating that mamma was cross and would better be avoided. I knew it, but rushed on, fancying I saw smoother waters ahead. Last winter I lived on tonics and stimulants and in the spring was positively ill."

"My physician ordered absolute rest or he would not answer for the consequences, and so with my babies, I went off to a sleepy little village to vegetate. 'It was there I fully realized the folly of my ways, and I learned it as

many a mother has learned wisdom—from the mouth of a child. My little boy brought a tiny boat in one day, asking for his oldest sister, that he could have the sail mended. 'I'll do it, Harold,' I said. 'Clara isn't here. Delightfully he brought it and hovered around me, with the beaming face at the unusual happening of mamma bothering with him. When it was done he thanked me and started off. At the door he stopped and looked back, his face full of sorrow, thought struggling for expression.

"Then he turned and came back to me. 'Mamma,' he began, 'you ain't busy always up here, are you?' and before I could reply he finished his thought: 'Let's stay in the country every one of the days, will you?'

"Wasn't that a rebuke? I thought it was and I took it. 'So I've come home refreshed in health and spirit, and I mean to keep so. I've written moderation over the walls of my house. In every room I look for it. Not that I have sunk into a torpor of inactivity—that would be as bad as the other extreme—but I am trying to take things quietly, I belong to one club instead of five, and I have reduced all my goings and comings in the same ratio. I read somewhere the other day that a prominent medical man had said that half the women in this country were starving to death and the other half were wearing themselves out—working without giving proper attention to food and rest."

"Now, I know one woman who isn't going to do either any more if she can help it."—[The Interior.

Keeping Young.

There was once a woman who shuddered at the thought of growing old.

No woman really likes to grow old. There are those who profess themselves quite willing to do so, and who seem to think it a duty to take not only pleasantly, but eagerly, the various steps which mark advancing age. Long before it is actually necessary they give up all forms of active amusement, with the smiling explanation: "Well, I'm getting old. I must leave these pleasures for younger folks."

Of their own accord they take to unconventional, old-fashioned clothes, stiff ungraceful coiffure, and ugly colors, with the same innate idea that all things pretty, becoming, or modish should belong only to an age which they have passed, to a period of their lives which it savors of wickedness to regret or cling to. And there are others who, while their spirits rebel, yet force themselves to adopt the same policy. They preach themselves lectures on the beauty of old age, on growing old gracefully, on yielding the field, and retiring in favor of youth, and all the rest of the philosophy with which people force themselves to become old. Their friends assist them in various ways, and with all sorts of motives. Sometimes it is with love and tenderness they enforce the doctrine:

"Let me take the walk while you sit by the fire. I'm younger than you!" "Take this big easy-chair, auntie!" "This style is the most suitable for one of your age, dear!"

Sometimes the motives are not so kind, but they ring the same changes: "It must be vanity which makes you select a hat twenty years too young." "Much as I think of her, I must say that in a person of her age such liveliness is ridiculous." "How absurd! She goes out and enjoys herself as much as a young girl!"

So pushed along, they sighing, make the various changes they think necessary in their appearance and manners, and proceed to grow old as fast as possible.

But this woman who hated being old shuddered so hard over the prospect that at last her spirit suggested to her, "Well, don't get old; keep young."

"How?" she inquired, and proceeded to think it out.

She determined, in the first place, not to feel old, and never to acknowledge until she actually died that she was old. She would keep up all sorts of active exercise, being resolute against letting herself be "shelved" by anybody, from any motives whatever. She would decline extra warmth, ease and rest, which only invited the stealthy approach of the enemy she was determined to fight. She would keep her body in good condition by all proper means, but not by confessing that limbs and muscles were not meant to be used so long as they were at her service at all. And, above all, she would heed the voice which forever told her: "Don't worry. Keep quiet. Everything is all right." She would keep so thoroughly convinced that "everything is all right" that her severe conviction would keep her far above any outward assurances that "things are all wrong." And she felt sure that this quiet certainty of "all being well" in her soul would in time express itself in her face and her whole body in activity, helpfulness, beauty and youth. And how far this one woman succeeded is of less importance than the question, is not her example

better worth following than that of the woman who lent herself to getting old as fast as she was able?—[Harper's Bazar.

On Dits About Women.

Princess Victoria is said to be the cleverest of the daughters of the Prince of Wales. She is 25 years old, hearty, jolly, full of tact and aplomb. She carries on at least half her mother's correspondence and is full of energy and resources.

While other governments are opening the doors of employment to women, Russia has just issued a decree that henceforth the services of women as clerks, telegraph operators, ticket sellers, etc., on the railroads are to be dispensed with and the vacancies filled by men.

Since 1880, women have given five times as much to the education of men alone as to that of women, and twice as much to men's colleges as to women's and coeducational colleges together. This is proved by data collected by a committee of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae.

The first woman to register in Colorado under the act extending the suffrage was the wife of ex-Gov. Routt. To the question concerning her occupation, in life she answered "A housewife," and was so recorded. This was both right and womanly and democratic. Her exercise of the suffrage will not make her less a housewife.

There is a discussion in the Spectator on "The Code of Honor Among Women." From this it would appear that the point at which women seem to fail most in honor is in controversy. One of the writers says that the sanction of a convention, falsely kind, which enables women to use the peculiarities of their position in the world both as a sword and as a shield is indeed one of the greatest impediments to their advancement.

The Bombay Guardian, Dec. 23, reports the safe arrival of Dr. Kate Bushnell and Mrs. Elizabeth Andrew from England, en route to Burma and China. They attended and addressed the Bombay district conference of the American Methodist Mission, then in session at Bombay. They were conducted by Mr. W. J. Gladwin and were invited to the platform by Bishop Thoburn, who formally introduced them to the conference. They received a cordial welcome.

Japan seems to be retrograding in regard to the higher education of girls. Last year the government had 34 high and normal schools admitting young women, while to-day there are but six such schools in the Empire higher than the primary grade. In the city of Kobe, with a population of 150,000, there is not a single public school for girls higher than the intermediate grade. This retrogression is attributed to the fear that if Japanese women become educated and emancipated they will no longer submit to polygamy.

One of the most useful of the many valuable charities to which Mrs. Frederick Vanderbilt devotes a generous slice of her income is the method in which she starts girls in occupations. Through the pastors of the foreign missionary churches established in the out-of-the-way corners of New York she learns of girls of ability who need only a start in life to render them fit to support themselves honorably. This assistance she furnishes by sending \$500 for the girl to devote to this purpose. One girl thus helped fitted herself at a cooking school for the position of a cordon bleu; another went to a training school for nurses; another underwent the necessary drill of a lady's maid; another studied in art. Every year at least ten young women are thus started in a useful, self-supporting career.

"So long as I consulted others I lacked inspiration," writes George Sand. "It came to me on the day I trusted my own wings." Of all French women George Sand had the greatest mind and the smallest feet and hands. Like George Eliot, her face was long, and resembled that of a horse.

Boys and Cigarettes.

Mr. Charles Bulkley Hubbell, a prominent lawyer of this city, and a very useful member of the Board of Education, has set on foot a much-needed reform in a thoroughly practical way. His attention having been called to the extent to which cigarette-smoking is practiced by school-boys, and to its pernicious effects upon the mind and body, he conceived the idea of appealing to the manhood of the boys and crystallizing school sentiment against the habit. He therefore prepared a very simple pledge, the signers of which agree to abstain from cigarette-smoking until they reach the age of 21 years, and to use their influence to induce all boys of their acquaintance to take the same step. As a result of Mr. Hubbell's efforts, anti-cigarette-smoking leagues have been started in the schools in this city, and it is Mr. Hubbell's anticipation that by the first of May 75,000 boys in the public schools of the metropolis will have enlisted in this reform movement. Mr. Hubbell mentions the fact that the medical examiner of one of the largest life insurance companies recently said that he would not accept as a risk the life of an applicant who had steadily smoked cigarettes between the ages of 8 and 18. He also calls attention to the fact that professional men and shopkeepers will no longer

take boys known to be cigarette smokers into their employ, so immediately does the habit interfere with their usefulness. These facts are to the point, although no evidence is needed to convince intelligent people of the perniciousness of cigarette-smoking by boys. Unfortunately, although this habit is of comparatively recent origin, it has spread to a surprising extent among the public school boys, the ease with which cigarettes are smoked and the low price at which they are sold tempting many boys to an indulgence the demoralizing effects of which they do not understand. The movement while Mr. Hubbell has inaugurated has spread to other cities, and ought to receive the adhesion of every school for boys in the country.—[The New York Outlook.

With the Poets.

Mother-Eyes.

A sin-stained man through prison bars
Peers up and sees two shining stars;
To him they're holy, pleading eyes—
His mother's eyes in paradise.
—Ellen Graham, in Ladies' Home Journal.

The Possibilities of Life.

Have we not all amid earth's petty strife
Some pure ideal of a noble life
That once seemed possible? Did we not hear
The flutter of its wings and feel it near,
And just within our reach? It was!
And yet
We lost it in this daily jar and fret,
And now live idle in a vague regret.
But still our place is kept, and it will wait,
Ready for us to fill it, soon or late;
No star is ever lost we once have seen,
We always may be what we might have been!
Since Good—though only thought, has life and breath,
God's life—can always be redeemed from death;
And Evil, in its nature, is decay,
And every hour can blot it all away;
The hopes that lost in some far distance seem
May be the truer life, and this the dream.
—A. Procter.

The Merry-makers.

Among the wintry mountains
Beside the Northern Sea
There is a merry-making,
As old as old can be.
Over the river reaches,
Over the wastes of snow,
Halting at every doorway,
The white drifts come and go.
They scour upon the open,
And mass along the wood,
The burliest invaders
That ever man withstood.
With swoop and whirl and scurry,
These riders of the drift
Will mount and wheel and column,
And pass into the lift.
All night upon the marshes
You hear their tread go by,
And all night long the streamers
Are dancing on the sky.
Their light in Malyn's chamber
Is pale upon the floor,
And Malyn of the mountains
Is theirs for evermore.
She fancies them a people
In saffron and in green,
Dancing for her. For Malyn
Is only seventeen.
Out there beyond her window,
From frosty deep to deep,
Her heart is dancing with them
Until she falls asleep.

Then all night long through heaven,
With stately to and fro,
To music of no measure,
The gorgeous dancers go.

The stars are great and splendid,
Beryl and gold and blue,
And there are dreams for Malyn
That never will come true.

Yet for one golden Yule-tide
Their royal guest is she,
Among the wintry mountains
Beside the Northern sea.
—Bliss Carman in Harper's Bazar.

Uncontrolled.

The mighty forces of mysterious space
Are one by one subdued by lordly man.
The awful lightnings, that for eons ran
Their devastating and untrammelled race,
Now bear his messages from place to place
Like carrier-doves. The winds lead on his van.
The lawless elements no longer can
Resist his strength, but yield with sullen grace.
His bold feet scaling heights before untrod—
Light, darkness, air and water, heat and cold,
He bids go forth and bring him power and pelf.
And yet, though ruler, king, and demigod,
He walks, with his fierce passions uncontrolled,
The conqueror of all things—save himself.
—Ella Wheeler Wilcox in the Century.

Scientific Progress.

Scientific and Sanitary Facts and Suggestions.

THE DOCTOR KNEW.—If some men are skeptical others place an implicit faith in the doctor's prescriptions; and of these was a man in Limerick who went to the undertaker to order a coffin for Pat Connell.

"Dear me," said the undertaker, "is poor Pat dead?"
"No, he's not dead yet," answered the other; "but he'll die to-night, for the doctor says he can't live till morning, and he knows what he gave him."

COOKING POTATOES.—Dr. Letheby, the eminent English authority on foods, by a series of careful examinations found that when potatoes were cooked without removing the skins, the loss of nutritive material was but about 3 per cent., against 14 per cent. when the skins were removed before boiling; a very wasteful process. Hence baked potatoes are not only more palatable but also evidently more nutritious than boiled potatoes in either case.

MAKING TEA.—It is well settled that the quickest extract gives the purest aroma and the freest from the injurious tannin. It is suggested that if the leaves be powdered, and the infusion made by pouring on boiling (soft) water, it may be poured off in half a minute, or as soon as one's views of economy will allow. A smart stirring of the leaves just before decanting, will in any case deepen the color and increase the richness of the infusion.

COFFEE AND LACTATION.—Dr. Alice McLean states (Med. and Surg. Rep.) that in an institution of which she had charge recently, in which there were about 30 nursing women, coffee was served twice a week. Regularly upon those days the nurses in charge reported a scarcity of breast milk, and there was frequently a necessity for resorting to artificial feeding to eke it out. To the obvious suggestion of abstinence in such cases, is added the complementary suggestion that coffee might be useful where the secretion becomes undesirable or excessive.

DRUGS AND KIDNEY DISEASES.—One factor, at least, in the great increase of kidney diseases may be found in the enormous modern consumption of mineral waters, drugged drinks and other specifics and nostrums for indigestion, want of appetite or sleep, torpid liver, cough or throat trouble, "that tired feeling," etc. Whatever other harm any drug or mineral may or may not do, it is sure to contribute unnatural and unhealthy labor and irritation to the kidneys in eliminating it from the circulation. The fact that kidney diseases are the special scourge of the well-to-do in cities, where every drug store and every dinner table is a daily resort for pouring down the sort of stuff above mentioned, goes far to countenance this way of accounting for the prevalence of kidney diseases.

EMOTIONS AND CONTAGIONS.—An able writer in a recent number of the Popular Science Monthly gives a number of curious facts about the effect of emotions on contagious diseases. Among others are these:

"Many violent maladies have been supposed to have been produced under the operation of moral influences. Sennert believed that fear was capable of provoking erysipelas. Hoffman also made fear and the adynamia resulting from it play an important part as the predisposing cause of contagious diseases. Dr. H. Tuke believed, in particular, in the influence of fear upon the contagion of rabies. The breaking out of rabies has been sometimes observed after psychic emotion. Bouley cites the case of a dog which went mad after having been immersed in water. Gamleia cites a similar case in a man, and another in a woman who was frightened by a drunken man. In order to avoid the influence of fear, Desgenettes concealed the name and the nature of the plague; and it is to be remarked further that the Turks died less rapidly of it than the Christians. Cullen supposed that sad emotions favor contagious diseases, and particularly the plague. This disposition to contagion after violent emotions which determine discharge of the secretions may be partly explained by the fact that the conditions that diminish the proportion of the liquids of the blood favor absorption. It, however, seems at least probable that the nervous discharge is accompanied by alterations of the blood and modifications of the interior medium which justify the popular expressions concerning having bad blood and turning the blood. It is admitted that violent emotion is capable of causing and of curing intermittent fever."

"The old authors give the moral emotions a part in most eruptive fevers. We meet them in the etiology of cholera. Pneumonia sometimes appears on the occasion of a strong moral emotion. Rostan relates the story of a woman who was suddenly struck with a very severe pneumonia on receiving news of the death of her son. Grissale observed it in a woman who, learning that she had been robbed, experienced instantly a violent attack, which was followed promptly by a chill, a stitch in the side and spitting of blood. Depressing emotions often seem to have an action on the development of tuberculosis."

It is not well to judge of a man's possessions by the number of keys he carries on his ring.