

HOUSEHOLD.

An Only Child.

(Eleanora H. Stooke, in 'Friendly Greetings'.)

Mrs. Johnson had been left a widow after only two years of married life, without any means of support except a pair of willing hands, which toiled from early morning to late at night to support herself and her little son Harry, who had been only a few months old at the time of his father's death, and was now eight years old.

Mrs. Johnson went out charing every day, and what with the few shillings she earned, and the broken victuals she had given to her from the houses where she worked, she managed to support herself and her boy.

'It's as much as I can do to make both ends meet,' she told her neighbor and friend, Mrs. Locke, on one occasion; 'sometimes I feel that tired I ache all over!'

'Why don't you get Harry to help you about your work at home?' asked Mrs. Locke. 'A great boy like yours ought to make himself useful. Why, I heard you splitting kindling wood just now! Surely that's a job Harry might do?'

'He works hard at school,' Mrs. Johnson responded, 'and he deserves his play-time; besides, I should be afraid to trust him to cut up wood, for fear he should cut himself.'

'I think you're spoiling Harry by taking too much care of him,' Mrs. Locke said; then seeing her neighbor's indignant look, she added: 'The child won't thank you for indulging him later on. To my mind children ought to share their parents' burdens. A selfish boy makes a selfish man, and that means a bad husband for some unfortunate woman, I take it.'

Mrs. Johnson was more than half inclined to be offended at her friend's plain speaking, but she knew Mrs. Locke meant well, and wisely curbed the sharp retort that rose to her lips. She thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that she did really coddle Harry more than was necessary. After that she tried to get him to do little things to help her, but the boy had been waited upon too long to readily comply with her wishes, and he grumbled so much when she wanted him to run an errand, or do any trifling job in the home, that she soon gave up asking him.

One evening, as Mrs. Johnson was returning from her day's work, she encountered a crowd of people following a drunken man, who, between two constables, was being conveyed to the police-station. Af-

ter the crowd had passed she noticed a young woman standing close by, weeping bitterly, with a baby in her arms, and a child of about two years of age clinging to her skirts.

'What is wrong?' Mrs. Johnson asked kindly.

'They've taken my husband off to the lock-up,' was the response, 'and he'll be sent to prison, I know he will! He came home drunk, and hit me and the children about, and knocked the furniture to bits, and then the police took him away.'

'Oh, dear!' cried Mrs. Johnson. 'What a bad fellow he must be!'

'He's not bad at heart,' the young wife said quickly, 'but when the drink's in him, he's like one mad! Jim's selfish, that's what he is, and I've got his mother to thank for what I and the children have suffered through him.'

'What was his mother like, then, that he has turned out so badly?' Mrs. Johnson inquired.

'She was a hard-working respectable woman,' was the reply, 'but she ruined Jim. She never corrected him in a fault, but taught him to think he must be first in every way. Oh, what shall I do if they send him to prison!'

'Perhaps they'll let him off with a caution this time,' Mrs. Johnson suggested soothingly.

'No,' the young woman answered hopelessly, 'they won't do that, because he's been before the magistrates twice already. There's nothing but the workhouse before me and my children.'

'Is your husband's mother living?' Mrs. Johnson asked, thinking pitifully of the poor woman who had ruined her son.

'No; she died a year ago,' the other replied; 'but she lived long enough to see what she had done. Jim was her only child.'

From that time Mrs. Johnson ruled her son with a firmer hand, insisting on implicit obedience to her wishes. Though he rebelled at first, he quickly learnt that his mother would be obeyed, and, being really a good-natured boy, he soon began to take pleasure in helping her, so that he grew up considerate for her comfort, and would do anything for his mother's happiness.

Grahams.—Two cups buttermilk, 1 teaspoon soda, level full, salt, equal parts flour (sifted) and graham to make a very stiff dough. Drop into oiled tins. If less flour is used, making them of thinner batter, shorten with two tablespoons lard, and bake in patty pans in hot oven.

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