

THE HOUSEHOLD.

CO-OPERATION IN THE FAMILY.

BY ANELIA H. BOTSFORD.

It is a pity that it should ever, even unintentionally, be the case that the rest of the family should co-operate to make work for one weary woman; and yet this is actually the fact in many a home. Consider if in the range of your acquaintance you do not know the household in which husband and children alike expect to be waited on by 'mother,' and instead of saving her steps are constantly making unnecessary demands upon her. Their wraps and hats are never hung up, but thrown down on the nearest chair or table, apparently that mother should have more work to keep the rooms in order; since the owners could as easily put them in the proper as in the improper place. When any article from a hat to a pin is wanted, there is a call for mother to find it; the thought of hunting anything up one's self never occurs in these homes. There is a story, probably a literal fact, of a man whose Sunday shirt and collar were invariably put in the same corner of the same bureau drawer, yet who inquired every Sunday morning for forty years 'Wife, where's my clean shirt?'

In such homes the bed-rooms are in disorder because clothing is thrown anywhere, the sitting-room is untidy with scattered books and papers, and the closets are confusion confounded. It is remarkable how much work a family can make when they co-operate in this way. About meals, for instance; the habit of coming in an hour before or an hour after dinner-time and demanding 'something to eat in a hurry,' is an excellent way to add to the regular work; an unannounced absence which keeps the meal waiting is also quite effective. One man, whose business required much correspondence and preparation of legal papers, invariably tore into tiny bits all answered letters and other waste papers and threw them on the floor wherever he happened to be sitting. As he could not be followed about the house by a perambulating waste paper basket, he was followed instead by a patient woman picking up the scattered scraps. This unnecessary waiting upon a man was carried to an extreme by the wife, who was every morning called by her husband to bring him his trousers from the chair beside the bed before he would get up.

Children can scarcely be blamed for growing up in the habit of letting mother do everything for them if they see their father requiring constant service from her. At their very best children need much care and attention, they necessarily add greatly to the home work, but when they become selfish and exacting there is scarcely any limit to the burdens they may impose. Co-operation in making work is in such a family a terrible success.

There should be family co-operation of a different kind, and it already exists in some happy homes. In the average household even when a servant is kept there are many home duties to be performed. If these are divided among the members of the family none need be burdened, but if all are laid on one back it will surely be overtaxed. No doubt the mother is mainly responsible for the division of these duties. If she have the gift of generalship she will direct her forces wisely, and by united labor the work will be quickly and easily done. Children can do as much to help as to hinder if they are only trained aright.

In the home of one of these born managers the five-year-old Daisy will wash and wipe the dishes, sweep down the stairs, polish the windows with a damp chamois as far as she can reach from the highchair. She does the errands to market and grocery. Indeed, the busy mother says 'I don't know how I could get along without Daisy to help me and amuse the baby while the others are at school.' And yet Daisy has plenty of time to play, and is not a little old woman, but as quaint and sweet a child as can be found. The older children are given larger tasks and trusted with more responsibilities. And why should not all members of the family feel that they have a duty and a rightful share in keeping the house in order? Why should they not be trained to save work, not to make it? Many of the seemingly

hopeless problems of the housewife might be solved in this way.

Consider the never-empty mending basket. If each one mended her or his own clothes the burden would not be heavy on any one. Quite small children—boys included—can be taught to darn a stocking, sew on a button or an ordinary patch. There would not be so many careless rents among the little folks if they had to do the repairing. Another way of saving work is in training the children never to throw down their clothes. It is just as easy to put the garment away while it is in one's hand, and it saves another person extra trouble. Each child should, as far as strength will allow, keep its room in order—putting it to air in the morning, and keeping it neat. The larger children will really enjoy a share in the cooking and ironing. If the mother will plan out the work and have the necessary patience to hold the children to their tasks, she will be surprised to see how much easier the home cares can be made.—*Christian at Work.*

THE ART OF MENDING.

Since the cry of reform in the way of handiwork has gone over the land, women are taking an interest in the old-fashioned art of mending and darning that surprises one not conversant with the present state of revived, if not lost, arts. Naturally, mending is not darning, and vice versa, but they blend together like two harmonizing shades. Patience and practice will bring forth wonderful results, as I believe that any woman can mend and darn well if she only wills to do it, and keeps on trying until her object is attained. Many good seamstresses cannot mend, as they never have time to devote to such work; but do not say, 'I cannot mend,' for you can, if you will, and it is fascinating work to watch the old garment made new, or a rent become almost invisible under the nimble fingers.

Never put new, stiff muslin with old, as from sheer perverseness the old will tear around the edge of the new. Buy several yards of light-weight muslin, wash and boil it soft, and iron out. Keep this for all patches and new pieces to be put in underwear, using 40 thread to sew with. I do not approve of coarse thread or needles in sewing if the material will take a finer, as the former tears old goods when pulling the thread through. In patching a piece of muslin cut the new piece much larger than the old, and do not fell down the seams of the patch. This will raise a storm, as raw edges are not usually considered a neat finish, but they are at least comfortable, and a thick seam is not if on a thick fabric. Overcast the edges, run the sides around, turn in the edge of the torn part, hem them down, and you will have a flat patch, be it on muslin or flannel underwear, boys' trousers, etc. Always press a patch on the wrong side when it is finished. Use linen thread for mending men's or boys' clothing, or sewing their buttons on. Lace is mended by basting it on a piece of embroidery leather and working the hole over with lace thread, coming in tiny balls, to imitate the pattern as closely as possible. Lace curtains are quickly and easily mended by pasting with starch a piece of net over the tear, and pressing it on with a warm iron. When a button tears out, leaving a great hole, cover the space with a piece of the material trebly doubled, sewing it down on all sides, and then sew the button on again.

When a dress tears, it is nine times out of ten a zigzag line that is made, to try the mender. Baste under this a piece of the new goods, pulling the ragged edges close together, and running a line of long stitches close to the tear, and a second one two inches beyond. Ravel long threads from a bit of the goods; if you have none, use fine sewing silk, and darn with them over the unsightly gap, making even stitches over and under the work, running them certainly half to an inch beyond the hole. When done, apply a damp cloth to the wrong side, and press with a warm iron, first pulling out the basting threads, or the marks will be pressed in the goods. If the tear takes a piece out of the cashmere, or whatever it may be, then baste a new piece as before, under the torn edges, and use ravelings in a fine darning needle. This time make three small stitches beyond the edge, on the dress, and two stitches over

the edge on to the new or inserted piece. Darn all around in this manner, pulling the thread evenly, and keeping the patch perfectly smooth over the palm of the left hand. In this manner the centre of the new piece is not covered with stitches. When done, lay a cloth over the right side of the patch and press it with a warm iron. I have seen this kind of a patch made by French nuns so beautifully that it could hardly be found. Do not hurry with mending, and do not begin a difficult or long task of it when tired.

In buying dress goods, always have at least half a yard left over to mend with, or make a new collar, cuffs, etc. Save all the small pieces for mending, as any gown is apt to be torn. If in the habit of remodeling gowns, buy a yard extra material for this task. Save old linen, not only for mending purposes, but for bandages, etc., in time of illness. Old towels are useful for mending, to cut the good portions out and hem for wash-rags, and also for cleaning-rags. Old stockings may be cut down for children, and thus every 'old thing' has its use.

There is much to say on the subject, this is only a beginning.—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

CHILDREN'S ALLOWANCES.

In providing for a family, while the roof, the fire, the food, are the province of its head, the household will run easier if the rest is left to individuals. By the time it is ten years old give each child an allowance, great or small, and train it in the proper spending thereof. Make them understand in the outset that they have with it liberty and accountability. That is, if against better counsel they waste the money, they will be left to suffer the lack of it. Or, if the necessity is so imperative as to force its supply, charge the cost against subsequent allowances, or else give the spendthrift a chance to work it out.

The advantages of such a course are so manifest as hardly to need enumeration. It shows you unmistakably the natural bent of each young mind, gives opportunity equally to correct overlavishness or cultivate liberality. What is even more important, it gives thoroughly excellent training in ways and means, teaches the true value of money, not to mention prudence, foresight, and self-control. Of course the earliest spending ought to be under advice. All of it, indeed, may well be, yet the adviser ought not to speak with the voice of authority. For in that case the allowance falls to a mere matter of finance, instead of being a means to develop prudence, foresight, and individual judgment. It is certainly the part of wisdom to set before your child the results of use as against those of waste, but if you cannot persuade to the better choice, let him be driven with the sharp lash of experience.

See that the allowance is paid promptly to the last penny. After that, say only that it must suffice for a stated period, and discourage by all means in your power either borrowing or going in debt. Require payment scrupulously, no matter who the creditor, discourage haphazard spending, and never be too busy or too indolent to run over the small accounts at the end of the term.—*Harper's Bazar.*

GOOD MANNERS IN CHILDREN.

If people would only realize how very, very easy it is to teach children good manners when they are little, it seems to me they never would neglect to attend to it. The youngster is allowed to go his own way, to violate every rule of courtesy, sometimes of decency, until his habits are to an extent formed. Then there is a great breaking-up of established notions, and the child is punished and nagged and worried for doing that which it has heretofore been permitted to do without criticism. It becomes angered, sullen, unsettled and irritable, and if it has a strong sense of justice—which, by the way, is more common in children than people, as a rule, give them credit for—it feels outraged and abused, and becomes unmanageable and rebellious. The best school of manners for a child is the parents' example and home-training.

Company manners are, by all odds, the worst element that ever entered into a family. Just why people should indulge

themselves in all sorts of careless, indifferent and ill-bred habits when they are alone at home, and put on a veneer of courtesy, amiability and polish when somebody comes, is one of the many mysteries of this very mysterious thing that we call life. How much easier it would be to maintain the steady uniform deportment, to follow out the same theories and hold to the same principles Sunday and week days, storm and shine, alone or in society. Veneers are a makeshift. They may have their uses but are far less desirable than the solid material all through. One lasts for a little while, the other weathers the storms of time, hard usage and the wear and tear of every-day life.—*Ledger.*

WASTED.

There is no waste more hurtful than the waste of strength over things that, for very little money, you could hire another person to do for you very much better. Such economy is, indeed, little short of criminal, for thereby health, happiness—life itself may be lost. To do well whatever is within the compass of strength and capacity is an honor, a benefit, to every human creature. To drive yourself past the limit, either for the sake of saving or of ostentatious spending, is a bitter waste of time and all its best gifts.

IDEAL WOMAN.

In one of her addresses at Chicago Lady Aberdeen said she thought the ideal woman had been sketched by Lowell in one of his beautiful poems:

For with a gentle courage she doth strive,
In thought, in word, in feeling so to live
As to make earth next heaven; and her heart
Herein doth show its most exceeding worth,
That, bearing in her frailty her just part,
She hath not shrunk from evils of this life,
But hath gone calmly forth into the strife,
And all its sins and sorrows hath withstood
With lofty strength of patient womanhood.

NUMBERING OUR DAYS.

If we sit down at set of sun
And count the things that we have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying act, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went,
Then we may count the day well spent.

But, if through all the livelong day,
We've eased no heart by yea or nay;
If, through it all,
We've nothing done that we can trace,
That brought the sunshine to a face;
No act most small,
That helped some soul and nothing cost,
Then count that day as worse than lost.

GEORGE ELIOT.

DOUGHNUTS IN RHYME.

One cup of sugar, one cup of milk;
Two eggs beaten fine as silk.
Salt and nutmeg (lemon'll do);
Of baking powder, teaspoons two,
Lightly stir the flour in;
Roll on pie board not too thin;
Cut in diamonds, twists or rings,
Drop with care the doughy things
Into fat that briskly swells
Evenly the spongy cells,
Watch with care the time for turning;
Fry them brown—just short of burning
Roll in sugar; serve when cool.
Price—a quarter for this rule.—
—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

RECIPES.

Do NOT THROW AWAY CRACKERS that have become soft. To render them eatable, put them in a shallow pan and heat in the oven. A little salt sprinkled over the crackers will be an addition.

To KEEP FRUIT PIES from running over, mix a tablespoonful of flour with enough cold water to make a thin paste. Just before putting on upper crust, spread the paste around the edge of the under crust. Press the upper crust firmly upon the lower, and make a slight opening in the upper crust for steam to escape.

LADY'S CAKE.—Three-fourths of a cupful of butter, two cupfuls of sugar, half a cupful of milk, three cupfuls of pastry flour, the whites of six eggs, one teaspoonful of baking powder, one teaspoonful of essence of almond. Beat the butter to a cream. Add the sugar, gradually, then the essence, milk, the whites of eggs beaten to a stiff froth, and the flour, in which the baking powder has been mixed. Bake in one large pan or two small ones, and frost, or not, as you please. If baked in sheets about two inches deep, it will take about twenty-five minutes in a moderate oven.