

THE HOUSEHOLD.

THE NURSERY.

BY CHRISTINE TERHUNE HERRICK.

The nursery should be the pleasantest room in the house.

One requisite must be insisted upon by even the poorest; the nursery must have sunshine. House-keepers sometimes make the mistake of selecting the least attractive room in the house for the nursery, and reserving a pleasanter one for the guest-chamber. This is less occupied than any other in the house, and little harm is done if it is in shadow most of the day. The perfectly arranged mansion should, of course, have sunshine in every room some time during the day, but there are very few houses that are perfectly arranged. Babies are like those plants that dwindle and pine if kept in the house. They need sunlight more than their elders, and if it is unavoidable that there should be some gloomy sleeping-rooms, let them be occupied by the grown-up members of the family who are not obliged to spend most of their time in their bedchambers.

There is no reason why the furniture of the nursery should be such as to produce a dismal effect upon a stranger entering the room. This apartment is too often converted into a depository for rickety and shabby furniture, placed there with the excuse that the children will never know the difference. But they do know in a short time, and very often feel the shabbiness about them more than their elders believe.

A nursery may be made beautiful to childish sight, and attractive even to older persons, at a small outlay. The floor-covering may be a neat ingrain carpet or a matting, with rugs laid here and there. The matting is more easily kept clean than the carpet. The only objection to it is that it is cold in winter, but as the children should never be allowed to sit directly on the floor at that time of year, this drawback is not important. The rugs may be made of breadths of carpet from one to two yards in length, hemmed or fringed at the ends, and may be placed where they will do most good—by the baby-house beside the little table, or wherever the children's favorite corners may be. A fur rug upon which the baby may roll at his ease is a great addition to a nursery, and when handsome furs are out of the question, an excellent substitute may be provided by sewing together a couple of sheepskins. These will wear an unlimited length of time.

A protest must be entered against permitting children to sit or lie on the floor in cold weather. More cases of influenza, croup, and lung trouble are contracted in this way than one imagines. The coldest air is always nearest the floor, and if there is a draught anywhere it is felt there. Have cushions stuffed with hair or excelsior, and covered with Turkey red, blue denim, or some other fabric that will keep clean a long time, and may be easily washed when soiled, and let the children sit on these if they want to play on the floor. Better even than these is a broad low table, around which the children may sit in their little chairs. Upon this flat surface they may arrange their toy villages and menageries, build their block houses, and play games.

If there are curtains in the room—and they would better be left out—they should be of light material, like stamped Madras or serim, that can be taken down and shaken at least once a week. The dust they gather and hold is not good for baby lungs, and their place can be satisfactorily filled by holland shades. Weather-strips around the sides of the sashes should exclude insidious draughts.

An open fireplace is among the best ventilators one can have in the nursery, or indeed in any other room. Either a wood fire, or a coal grate will serve, although the latter is less trouble to take care of, and is less liable to throw out dangerous sparks. The fireplace should always be guarded by a wire netting, such as comes for the purpose, or else by a high nursery fender. If the room is heated by furnace or by an air-tight stove, ventilation must be sought in some other way. Children need plenty of fresh air as well as of sunshine, and nothing is worse for them than to keep them in a close, stove-warmed

room. The temperature should never rise above seventy or seventy-two, and the atmosphere should be revitalized from time to time by lowering the window from the top for a few moments. The room should also be thoroughly aired night and morning.

If there is paper on the nursery walls when the house is taken, the parents should assure themselves that the room has not been used as a sick-chamber by its former occupants. If the walls are re-papered, every vestige of the old covering should first be scraped off. The new paper should be allowed to become completely dry before the children are admitted to the room.

There should be no elegant, easily injured furniture in the nursery. Low wicker rocker; two or three tables of a height to suit the chairs; one or two broad trunk lounges for the children's clothing, with stuffed tops upon which the little folks can stretch their weary limbs when tired with play; a set of shelves to hold their books; a basket or two for small toys; a doll-house and the floor cushions already described—are all that are necessary. A few chairs may be there to supply accommodations for older visitors, and if possible there should always be a cupboard or closet as a receptacle for the larger playthings.—*Harper's Bazar.*

EIGHTY BISCUITS.

"My family sometimes eat eighty biscuits at one meal," said a lady, reflectively, as she sat with some friends on a hotel piazza, looking mountain-ward.

She had left her household cares at home, and had come to the mountains for much-needed rest, but once in a while, in a group of fellow-boarders, the talk would slip away from the scenery, the grandeur and the sunsets, to the little familiar home tasks that were going to assert themselves again so soon.

"How do you make those eighty biscuits?" asked somebody, eagerly; and I am willing to confess that somebody was myself, for I had been wanting a good biscuit recipe.

I did not stop to wonder at the number, eighty, though it seemed so enormous, for I knew that the family was a large one, and included five hearty men and boys among the rest.

"I make them very small," she said, laughingly, in answer to some one else's dismayed exclamation, "and we have them with our baked beans Sunday mornings. Of course the biscuits are light and delicate, or we could not eat so many."

Then turning to me, she said, "I will write the recipe out for you some day while you are here."

"And oh!" I exclaimed, "please tell me every little thing, so I cannot make a mistake!" For I was a novice then.

She kept her word, and when I came home, among the Indian baskets, the birch bark, and the pressed ferns in my trunk there lay the directions for the biscuit, brought down to a quantity proportioned to my family of four.

And here they are, just as she worded them in her thoughtfulness:

"One quart flour, one tablespoonful white sugar, one full tablespoon butter or lard, or equal quantities of each; salt; not quite half a yeast cake dissolved in warm water.

"Rub the shortening into the flour; mix with the warm water in which the yeast has been dissolved. I mix broad very stiff, but biscuit I mix softer than bread. They rise quicker and are more delicate. Set the dough in a warm place to rise. When risen, mould on a board and set in a cool place. About an hour and a half before your meal, put the dough on your board, flatten or roll it, cut out the biscuit, and set them in a warm place to rise. Be careful and not handle them more than is absolutely necessary. I take the pieces, mould them, and put them in a pan by themselves, for anything moulded takes so much longer to rise. Lardshortening makes anything more delicate, but I prefer butter. Experience will teach you more about bread and biscuit than I can. Begin early in the forenoon so that they will have time to rise for your tea. If you like rolls, use scalded milk instead of water; they are delicious. Be careful in the baking; more than half the goodness depends on that."

I followed the recipe, and use it to this day, whenever we want biscuit, but I always use the milk instead of water so they will taste like rolls. The milk has to be boiled first, to ensure the dough against souring. This recipe makes forty-five little biscuits, cut out with a good-sized napkin ring, and if broken into cards of four biscuits each, almost everybody will begin by taking four, so there will soon seem not to be so very many.—*Youth's Companion.*

WASH CLOTHS.

It is surprising how many nice homes, well furnished and nicely appointed in most ways, do not have a supply of wash cloths. There is an idea prevalent that any sort of a rag will answer the purpose—an old stocking leg, a salt bag, a piece of gauze underwear, an old napkin or piece of towel. As to the kind, I find that those which can be bought all ready in the large drygoods stores are not only too thick and rather large, but are quite expensive. Much the best way is to buy white or unbleached Turkish towelling, of a quality that costs fifty or sixty cents a yard, and cut each yard into three lengthwise strips, and each strip into four pieces. This will give you, from a yard of towelling, one dozen wash-cloths a quarter of a yard square.

These can be neatly bound with white silesia cut bias; but this mode of finishing does not compare for prettiness or agreeableness with "button-holing" them all round with red working cotton. Get a coarse cotton and put the stitches about one-half dozen to the inch. This is very good fancy-work for an evening, or is nice for the little girls to do.

If you want to make a unique and most acceptable gift to a busy housewife friend, send her a dozen wash cloths prepared in this manner.

Teach boys to use them thoroughly, rinse and hang them up properly, and you have made quite a stride in your refinement teaching. Of course, if you teach your boys this, you will not leave your girls without the lesson.

A final word about the washing of wash cloths. Have all that have been used put into the wash each week. Let them be boiled as the towels are; but do not have them ironed. If they are carefully smoothed and folded, they are better than if ironed.—*Good Housekeeping.*

THE HOUSEHOLD PURSE.

True sociologists can never cease to deplore the common custom in family life of the husband alone carrying the purse. This practice is an injustice to a frugal wife. It is discouraging to the hard-working and economical housekeeper to know that what ought to be the common purse supplies freely the husband's every desire, even his useless or vicious habits, while her own modest and entirely proper tastes, which so generally are contented upon home adornment, are churlishly denied. And a self-respecting wife must feel humiliated at being compelled to receive absolutely needed funds in small sums from a reluctant hand.

Many a man living in the plainest style would have a home made attractive by its domestic charm and artistic beauty had the little wife been allowed to spend for such purposes a little of what he has spent for his personal gratifications. There is, perhaps, no more pregnant source of marital infelicity than this same habit. It ought to be abandoned; but so long as the customs which at present antedate the married state obtain, there is little hope of any general change in those which prevail under that state. The husband simply continues to treat his wife as she has always been treated. She has never been trusted before her marriage with a stated income to spend at her own discretion. She has been accustomed to having her bills paid for her, and to live in blissful (?) ignorance of the cost of keeping house, and cannot, as a rule, be expected to develop all of a sudden a faculty which has never been educated.

While this explains, it by no means justifies the conduct of the husband. He had no right to get married without first satisfying himself that his future partner had common sense enough to entitle her to his confidence. Lack of experience is a comparatively small matter. Husband and

wife could sit down together, make a careful estimate of means and expenditure and then agree that certain portions of the expenditure should be attended to by the husband and certain other portions by the wife, and that the income should be divided between them proportionately. A good margin should be laid aside whenever possible for present or future contingencies and out of this reserve fund any mistakes which might be made by either in the earlier years, through inexperience, could be rectified.

The commencement of a new year is a good time for introducing reforms, and many an unsatisfied husband can reform himself into a happy husband and recall the days of his early love by making the frank acknowledgment that half of all he possesses and of all his income belongs to the wife who has helped him to earn it and to bring up his family, and then making a liberal arrangement with her as to the proportion of income to be allotted to each and the manner in which it is to be expended.—*New York Witness.*

MENDING RUBBER BOOTS.

"Procure from a depot of rubber goods, or from a large store where such goods are found, a piece of virgin India-rubber. With a wet knife cut from it the thinnest shavings possible; with a pair of sharp shears divide the shavings into fine shreds. Fill a wide-mouthed bottle about one-tenth full of the shredded rubber. With pure benzine, guiltless of oil, fill the bottle three-fourths full. The rubber in a moment will perceptibly swell if the benzine is a good article. If frequently shaken, the contents of the bottle, in a few days, will be of the consistency of honey. Should there be clots of undissolved rubber through it, add more benzine; if it be thin and watery, a moiety of rubber is needed. The unvulcanized rubber may sometimes be found at the druggist's. A pint of cement may be made from a piece of solid native rubber the size of a large hickory nut; this quantity will last a family a long time, and will be found invaluable. Three coats of it will unite, with great firmness, broken places in shoes, refractory patches and soles on rubbers; will fasten backs on books, rips in upholstery, and will render itself generally useful to the ingenious housewife, as it will dry in a very few minutes. It forms an admirable air and water-tight cement for bottles, by simply corking them and immersing the stoppers in it.—*New York Independent.*

PUZZLES—NO. 1.

PI No. 1.

Lead hitw toranhe sn' dnyo ahev,
Herout aled tiwh ouy.

STANLEY P. CRAWFORD.

PI No. 2.

A fost wanros htrunet yawa htwar.
STANLEY P. CRAWFORD.

SQUARES.

No. 1.—1. Hauls. 2. To revolt. 3. To wait for.
4. Wood for splitting. 5. Repose.

No. 2.—1. Watchful. 2. To bet. 3. Nimble. 4. Remains. 5. Upright.

No. 3.—1. Kingly. 2. To escape. 3. To lead.
4. A serpent. 5. Side looks. R. H. JENKINS.

BIBLE ENIGMA.

I'm in twenty, ten and two.
I'm in whithor, when and who.
I'm in seven, eight and nine,
I'm in lively, light and line,
I'm in only, one and none,
I'm in ready, start and run,
I'm in coward, lad and friend,
I'm in double, break and bond,
I'm in meadow, lane and street,
I'm in garment, home and neat,
I'm in heaven, earth and sea,
I'm in gentle, good, agree,
I'm in nature, night and sin,
I'm in window, sign and inn,
I'm in forest, flower and leaf,
I'm in hermit, miser, thief,
I'm in being, life and breath,
I'm in shadow, mould and death.

HANNAH E. GREENE.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.—NUMBER 26.

SQUARE No. 1.—P O P E
O R A L
P A I L
E L L A

CHARADE.—1. Base. 2. Ball: Whole, Baseball.

SQUARE No. 2.—I I L A C
I R I S H
L I T T E
A S I E S
C H E S T

BIBLE ACROSTIC.—

A - LIE - N Job 19, 15.
I - O Gen. 16, 6.
A - BB - A Mark 14, 36.
M - ESSIA - H Dan. 9, 25, John 1, 41.