

HOUSEHOLD.

Real and Pretended Ideals.

(By Kate Upson Clark.)

Although this subject has been pressed some more than once to every reader of these lines, few or us, after all, fully appreciate the moulding influence which our ideals, rather than our spoken words, have in our homes. We all know women who pretend that they would rather have their children Christians than anything else, yet deliberately encourage them in worldliness and all sorts of surface accomplishments before spirituality. In a certain Christian household, for example, the mother entertained in her soul a feeling that men could not be as pure-minded and as good as girls.

'You can't make mollicoddles of your boys,' she said to friends in private. 'A man has got to know the world. He has got to sow some wild oats or he can never take his place among men.'

That mother died of a broken heart. One of her sons is a wanderer on the face of the earth, shut out from all decent households; two others died from their excesses; a fourth was saved only by the efforts of a devoted minister. She said to her children, 'Go to church, read the bible, love whatsoever things are honest, pure and of good report, and practice them.' Her heart said: 'I know you cannot be very good and I don't expect it. Neither does the world. You will have to sin a little and we will all wink at it, but you must not go too far. You must end as respectable men.'

It was her heart and not her tongue which had the moulding influence. One thinks of Emerson's, 'How can I hear what you say when what you are is thundring so in my ears?'

An ideal of absolute purity, charity, unselfishness must be preached to our children, and the mother, the father, the pastor must all believe in it to their soul's core, and long and labor for its realization. It will probably never in this world be quite attained, but let the ideal never, even in thought, be lowered.

Beware how you laugh at a child who tells you of a 'good time' which to you seems tame and insipid. Many a youngster is given a distaste for simple joys and a hunger for the artificial and the sensational because his elders made fun of his expressions of pleasure at a trifle.

Conversely, let us express our own delight in the simple and the true. 'What a lovely evening we are having at home together! To have Mary and Tom play for us and papa to read a good story and a poem is worth more than the most thrilling melodrama that was ever acted. Or, 'How good you have been all this afternoon. You have made your father and me very happy. What a nice day we have had! Let us have another as soon as we can.'

A right ideal of a truly good time is something which half of even our good people do not possess.

The ideal gentleman is another object which too many of us fail to make plain to our children. He is, perhaps, a harder creature to find than the ideal lady. Sometimes the master of the house impersonates him admirably. Without casting any reflections upon him, in case he falls short in certain particulars, it may be wise to refer from time to time to other men.

'How beautifully Dr. Blank spoke this evening! His language is always refined and expressive. If I could use the English tongue as he does it would make me very happy. One cannot imagine him swearing or using coarse slang.'

'Mr. Smith is a perfect gentleman. He is never seen twirling a cane along the street, or holding a cigar off, with an air of 'See how graceful and fashionable I am!' He does not smoke nor try to "show off" in any way. He is a man through and through, a thinking, noble man. He never does things just because others do. He thinks everything out for himself, and tries to do what is right, without regard to other people.'

Perhaps it is not an extravagant statement to say that, if our boys knew just what a Christian gentleman is, but a small proportion of them would go astray. They have too often nothing to aim at, no proper standard upon which to model themselves.

Again, they think they are 'having fun' when they are really having a disagreeable time, which they often have to become inured to in order to like it. They aim to be like rowdies, or semi-rowdies, because they see no real gentlemen; they drink and smoke and gamble, because they have not been taught the joy of higher pleasures—and this often when they come from homes where the pretended ideals are high, but the real ones hid from sight, but none the less effective, are low and mean.—The Congregationalist.

Sanitary Precautions.

There has been so much 'spoken and written and sung by men' and women, during these enlightened days of the passing nineteenth century on the subject of sanitation, in its relation to domestic science, that it seems almost impossible for a woman to live anywhere within sight and sound of civilization and not possess at least a slight knowledge thereof. And yet there are women so mature in the experience of housekeeping and self-satisfaction that an unquestioned domestic reign sometimes develops, as to be 'set' against anything in the nature of an innovation upon the 'way mother did' and, incidentally, a reflection upon their own good judgment. Others there are, however, who welcome the gradual change from stuffy living rooms crowded with plush furniture, chenille draperies, picture throws and tidies of impossible design, in varied hue and texture, and other erstwhile esthetic decoration, to polished floors, bamboo furniture and an almost entire absence of dust-catching ornaments. An excellent article on the subject, by Mrs. E. H. Chase, in the May number of 'The American Kitchen Magazine,' contains so many good points that we quote from it as follows:

'A friend put up in her house, in place of the usual heavy draperies, Japanese portieres made of short lengths of bamboo strung with colored beads between the lengths. She gave as a reason for the change, 'I need something, and these are, at least, clean. I am, I hope, done forever with heavy woolen draperies that are always catching the dust, inviting moths, and absorbing odors.' One who keeps them in a sanitary condition must spend a great deal of valuable time removing, beating, airing and putting them in place again. Life is too short, and the need of the world too great for a woman to spend her whole time fighting dirt. We need to be a little plainer. There is as much virtue in avoiding evil as in getting rid of it after it has come to us. If I could I would change every upholstered piece for bamboo or willow, and cover my floors with matting or, better, have them polished. When I have to change, I shall not buy velvet carpets nor upholstered chairs. They make a great deal of needless work and harbor a lot of dust and unhealthiness.'

'That carpets and draperies do hold disease, concealed in their folds, in the shape of dust brought in on the feet and skirts from the streets, is not to be questioned. This dust is set in motion by the broom and the dusting brush, and is breathed in by the inmates of the house, and we wonder where we get the diseases that attack us.'

'A closed room in which more than one person has to sleep, is certainly unsanitary. The gas from the "deadly coal stove" may do the work more quickly, but not more surely, than the air that has been breathed over and over in a close sleeping room. Lacking the best methods of ventilation a window should always be open an inch both at top and bottom, and if the draft is likely to strike the bed a strip of cloth should be tacked across. This will give a circulation of outdoor air, and the room will lose that clammy coldness that only vitiated air possesses, and the sleeper will breathe in new life and health instead of debility and slow poison.'—Union Signal.

A Mistaken Mother.

'Why don't you let Helen do that sewing?' I said to my wearied friend, who was nodding over a bit of mending. 'Surely she knows how to mend a plain garment like that.'

'She has never learned to sew,' was the reply. 'She is always busy with her books, and I hate to worry her. She will have a hard enough time by and by. I mean to

make her life as easy as I can while she is with me.'

It was so with the dish-washing, the bed-making, the cooking. 'Helen doesn't like to do this, that or the other. She is out with her friends. She is reading. She is tired. I don't like to make a drudge of her. I don't wish her hands to look like mine.' These were some of the sayings of the mistaken mother as apologies for the fact that Helen never helped in household affairs though there was no servant. 'Poor Helen! I pitied her from my heart. She was learning algebra and geometry, French and Latin, but was deprived of the sweet lessons in loving help, self-denial, womanliness and thoughtfulness that only a mother can give in the school of home. Helen was listless, idle, thoughtless, except in school, dependent upon others for the service that every woman should know how to perform.'

What of Helen's future home and the husband whose life she would largely make or mar? What of the possible children whose teacher and trainer she must be? The untrained girl finds endless difficulties before her when she is at last separated from the mother who has waited on her from babyhood. She has no skill, no deftness, no pleasure in duties for which she is utterly unprepared. The smallest service seems irksome.—'Congregationalist.'

Selected Recipes.

Sponge Pudding.—Rub smooth half a cupful of flour and half a pint of milk, and pour over it half a pint of boiling milk; cook in a double kettle five minutes, then remove from the fire, and add three level tablespoonfuls of cold butter, the yolks of three large eggs or four small ones, and one fourth cupful of sugar. Cool and stir in the well beaten whites of eggs; pour in a buttered pudding dish and bake in a pan of boiling water in moderate oven from thirty to forty minutes.

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