

HOUSEHOLD.

Ordinary.

An ordinary woman,
An ordinary wife,
An ordinary mother,
An ordinary life;
Ordinary methods for things both great and small,
Why should such a woman be ever missed at all?
An ordinary husband,
An ordinary home,
Ordinary children,
Yet she never cared to roam
From all the pretty duties of the plain and common day,
In living out a common life in the ordinary way.

Ordinary longings,
Ordinary fears,
Ordinary heartbreaks,
Ordinary tears;
Ordinary wrinkles and the thin hair touched with snow,
Showed the ordinary troubles of the form now bended low.

An ordinary illness,
Death's ordinary call;
The ordinary mourners,
And the ordinary pall.
The ordinary grieving o'er the mother's vacant place,
And the ordinary longing for her ordinary face.

An ordinary story,
On this ordinary earth,
But the ordinary spirit
Heard in its celestial birth,
As the heavenly portals opened, the welcome of the Son:
'Dear ordinary mortal, thy work has been well done!'

—Waif.

Table Manners.

Three neighbors at a summer hotel afforded interesting contrasts of table manners. The first was a young man from a remote country town on his wedding tour. He frankly ate with his knife, shovel fashion, and reached with his fork far down and across the table to spear the slice of bread he wanted to wipe up the gravy on his plate. The second was a hard-working city girl taking her brief vacation from the noisy office and the typewriting machine. She, too, occasionally lapsed into the ancestral use of the knife, though otherwise her manners were ladylike and good. The third was an elderly spinster from one of our large cities, who lived upon a pinnacle of social, intellectual, and hygienic superiority, which she was careful to magnify to all about her. Her first act on coming to the table, was to hold her glass to the light to see whether it was clean, then to subject her knife and fork to the same minute examination, and perhaps wipe them carefully on her napkin, while at intervals she instructed the raw waiter on the proper methods of the work. It is needless to say that the third was by far the most offensive of the three. Spearing bread from the common plate with one's fork and using the knife shovel fashion are not to be commended, but to throw suspicion upon the cleanliness of every utensil which your neighbors at the table use is far less neighborly and excusable. —'Congregationalist.'

At Another's Expense.

Every one likes to be thought obliging. If the reputation were to be had for the wishing, it would soon become universal. But kindnesses are more or less costly. It is not always possible to oblige others without inconveniencing ourselves, and therefore many people are chary of their favors except when they can do them at another's expense.

'Come over to dinner Sunday, won't you?' says Mary to the friend in the corner boarding-house. 'I know you must be hungry for home cooking.' Of course the friend is glad to accept. The prospect of escaping the mono-

tony of boarding-house fare for one meal, and sitting down to a home table again, seems positively alluring. But nevertheless Mary has no especial claim on her gratitude. That young woman dresses at her leisure, kisses her mother good-bye, adding a few cautions regarding the table and the dessert, and then goes off to church. The mother stays at home to oversee the incompetent maid, and be sure that everything is as it should be, for like many people who are averse to assuming responsibility, Mary's critical faculty is highly developed. Mary listens to the sermon in that satisfactory frame of mind which comes from a consciousness of having done a kindness, and enjoys her friend's outspoken gratitude without dreaming how little she deserves it.

John comes in from the office some evening and takes an unstamped letter from his pocket. 'I promised to put a special delivery on this,' he remarks to his younger brother. 'You hurry through your supper and take it over to the office, will you?' The younger brother displays no animation at the prospect, and John sets this down to the innate disobligingness of lads of his age. He has assured the writer that it would not be the least trouble in the world for him to post her letter, nor is it likely to be, as he has arranged it. But it does not occur to John that the younger brother is quite as anxious to follow the exciting adventures of the 'Boy Hunters' as he is to look over the market reports, nor does it impress him as unfair to buy a reputation for being obliging at another's expense.

Every one is acquainted with those ultra obliging people who never refuse any request, and who in consequence are continually getting into desperate tangles from which they are extricated only by the concerted actions of their friends. Such a young woman awoke the other morning to the realization that she had agreed to attend two committee meetings at three, and to investigate the case of a poor family said to be suffering for the necessities of life. She had also promised to make sandwiches for the missionary luncheon at twelve o'clock, and was to prepare a paper for the Current Events Club next day, beside a number of smaller commissions. Her demeanor at breakfast resulted in an inquiry and then a family council. Mother undertook the sandwiches. One sister started out to investigate the charity case, while another posted off to arrange for the postponement of one of the committee meetings. The little brother was entrusted with so many small errands that he was late to school. Yet as this young woman complacently settled herself to write her paper, it never occurred to her that she was something of an imposter in accepting the tribute she so often heard, 'What a sweet girl Miss — is. Always so ready to oblige.'

Kindness costs. The doing of a favor means sacrifice somewhere, but unfortunately the thanks do not always go to the one who has done the giving up. Some of us are enjoying a reputation for generosity which others have earned for us. It is pleasant to be thought obliging. The knowledge that others look to us and rely on us for help is a satisfying consciousness. But we should be sure that we do not accept gratitude to which we have no right. We must not buy our reputation at the expense of other people.—The 'Advantage.'

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Motherhood by Rule.

Young mothers tell me to-day that babies are little animals, and should be treated as such. Nerves, emotions, desires, moral impressions should be ignored or sternly repressed. The old way, we are told—the unscientific way—of coddling, rocking, singing lullabies, wearied the mother, created bad habits in the child, stimulated the brain over-much. Instead, rigid hours for baths, eating, sleeping are substituted, and no excitement is permitted to invade the infant life.

This may bring about a stronger and a healthier race of children—the next generation will show—but may not the effect upon the mother be to make her callous and selfish? Is baby only 'a little animal?' Yet, even the mother animal beckons and invites, coos and murmurs to its young. Watch a cow with a calf, a cat with kittens. How the brooding instinct asserts itself! The care of the human baby has come to be much like the taking of temperature by a trained nurse, at stated times. A child's cry now-a-days brings no pain to a mother's heart, because his physical wants being attended to, from her point of view he has nothing to cry about. Therefore she leaves him alone, to stifle his little griefs in sobs and sleep, or to learn early the better way of self-control and lonely content.

Here are a few instances that have come under my knowledge. A lady was taking dinner with friends who have a beautiful baby, brought up by rule. At five o'clock he was undressed, his legs and arms were bound bambino fashion, he was fed from a bottle, laid in his crib, tucked up with soft blankets; then a hot water bottle was placed at his feet, and the window was opened from top and bottom. It was winter and the room was perfectly cold. The light was extinguished, the door was shut, the mother descended to her dinner and her guest. She explained that the reason for confining little Arthur's limbs, was that he might be prevented from picking and throwing off the blankets, and so get cold. He had slept in a fireless room since he was born and had never had a cold. But he was a great thrasher. 'We have some things to learn from the ancients,' said the mother, sweetly.

During dinner the child cried incessantly. 'The modern theory is that crying strengthens the lungs. I always let him cry, knowing that it is good for him,' the mother said, in answer to the look of entreaty on her guest's face.

After a time the guest could endure it no longer. 'With your permission,' she said, 'I will go upstairs and take a look at your baby. That cry seems to me one of distress.'

The mother consented, and together they went into Arthur's room. The stopper had come out of the hot water bottle, and the child was lying helplessly, soaking, his crib deluged with water.

Aunt Fanny came from a western town to visit her nephew and his wife in New York. Mrs. Thompson had written enthusiastically about her first-born, whom she had named for Aunt Fanny. Her aunt longed to see and love the little one, and looked forward to the delight of tending her as the chief pleasure of the visit. But when she arrived she was told that she must not touch or hold the baby.

'Infants must not be handled any more than cats, if you wish for their physical development,' Mrs. Thompson said, with full conviction—the attitude of the young mother towards her elder is exasperatingly superior; she is so certain of being right, so perfectly sure that her way is the best.

Aunt Fanny felt with meek contrition that her experience in raising eight children counted for nothing. She had been a mother too early in a bygone century. So she watched while little Fanny was placed in her crib just when the clock struck certain hours, and left to take her nap alone. To be sure, Fanny never murmured, either then, or when, at another striking of the clock, she was set up straight, rudely awakened from a sound sleep, and given her bottle. When wide awake, she was dumped on the lounge in pillows, the only attention paid to her being to prevent her going to sleep before the correct time. The well-trained colored nurse performed all these services for baby. The mother was free to take Aunt Fanny out sight-seeing, for whole days.

'I never let baby interfere with anything I