

HOUSEHOLD.

A Contrast.

'What makes you talk so loudly, mother?' said Alfred, impatiently, 'I ain't deaf; there's no need o' you hollerin' at me!'

'Well, you don't pay any attention to what I say if you do hear me!' retorted his mother, in the same tone as before.

Alfred went out, shutting the door not very gently behind him. Mrs. Barker went on with her sweeping.

'How rough Alfred is,' she sighed. 'And he getting to be so saucy! I don't know what I shall do with him.'

The door opened, and two rosy girls of eight and ten appeared.

'Here—look out; don't get in my dirt!' she called out sharply, as they ran across the room and began to take off their hats and rubbers. One stopped with one rubber off and looked at her mother soberly for a moment.

'Are you cross?' she asked.

'Why, no,' said the mother, 'but I shall be if you bother me; I've got an awful lot of work to do, an' it's enough to make anybody cross to have folks running over the floor when they're sweeping.'

'Scoldin' seems awful queer when I first get home,' mused Nellie. 'We don't have any scoldin' at school only when some horrid girl gets mad, an' then Miss White makes her so shamed. Miss White don't scold; she's always talkin' low and nice.'

'Humph! I should like to see her here talkin' low and nice to you girls and Alfred; I'll bet you don't act so bad at school as you do at home! I hope you don't, anyway, for shame's sake!'

After the children had gone to bed Mrs. Baker did a great deal of thinking. Was she getting ill-mannered herself? Had she lost the sweetness of her young womanhood? What sort of time would there be in Miss White's schoolroom if she herself were the teacher, and if she should take the manners of her everyday life into the school-room?

She had seen Miss White once, and she recalled her pleasant face and easy, quiet ways. The children were getting old enough to make comparisons, and see things with eyes of their own. She was aware that in comparison with Miss White she would not appear very refined or womanly. She felt angry and spiteful at first.

'I'm as good as she is, if I don't dress quite so well and have such company manners!' she said to herself.

Then regret and shame crept into her heart, and finally she fell to crying. After she had a good cry she felt better, and she went to bed resolving that her children should not be obliged to give her a second lesson.

A week later, as Nellie was giving her mother the usual good-night kiss, she said, 'I like home better'n school. Miss White loves us all a little, but there's lots of us and it isn't much apiece; but here there's only us and you can love us a great big lot.'

Mrs. Baker's reward had come sooner than she had expected.—'The Word and the Way.'

'Mumps.'

(By Belle Sparr Lockett, in 'S. S. Times.')

There is a very precious child who has a way of wanting things done just as he dictates,—a way not uncommon among older folks, indeed.

This way of his many times works discord among playmates, harm to himself, and general unhappiness. We are never selfish and happy. This child's mother felt that a 'little preach' on the subject was necessary, when the time should be opportune.

When they were alone one day, and his mood was tender, as the mood of a child so often is, she said:

'Do you know how it is grieving me to see my little boy growing selfish day after day? Did you know that you almost always want your way in the games, saying how things shall be, and how they shall not be? It is spoiling your character, and I should not be the right kind of a mother if I did not try to change it.'

A very grieved little face dropped down, and a very sensitive lower lip quivered

helplessly. Was there anger and resentment, or self-reproach and regret, in that quivering lip? How we all shrink from the exposure of our weaknesses! How it hurts!

His mother's voice is very gentle now, and she takes two limp little hands in her own, caressing them lovingly:

'You know, dear, if there was something ugly growing on your cheek here that would spoil your face, we should have the doctor remove it, even if it did hurt,—shouldn't we?'

There was a nod, and an interested lifting of the eyes, and a pressing closer to the heart that he knew would not needlessly wound.

'So, now,' she continues, 'when I see something ugly growing on your character, something that is going to spoil it, don't you think we ought to try to remove it, even if it does hurt? When the good doctor cuts away the bad growth or puts medicine on it to take it away, he does not do it to hurt, but to help. Mothers don't tell their children about the wrong things in their characters to hurt their feelings, but to help them to get rid of such ugly things that the beautiful things may have a chance to be seen. So we are going to watch this ugly thing after this, you and I, and we're going to ask the good Doctor to help us remove it,—aren't we?'

A pair of glistening eyes gave assent, and two arms went swiftly around his mother's neck as he said:

'We'll just say "Mumps," when we see it.'

If Done with a Thought of Him.

If ever Jesus has need of me,
Somewhere in the fields of sin,
I'll go where the darkest places be,
And let the sunshine in;
I'll be content with the lowliest place
To earth's remotest rim;
I know I'll see His smiling face,
If it's done with a thought of Him.

Refrain:—

I'll trust my Lord, though I cannot see,
Nor e'er let my faith grow dim;
He'll bless the work, whate'er it may be,
If it's done with a thought of Him.

I may not be called to some great thing,
That would blazon my name on high,
But only to mend a broken wing,
Till ready again to fly;
Or only to give the cooling drink,
Or sight, when eyes are dim;
It doesn't matter at all, I think,
If it's done with a thought of Him.

I'll fill each day with the little things,
As the pressing moments fly;
The tendril, which the great oak clings,
Grows as it climbs on high,
I'll trust my Lord, though I cannot see,
Nor e'er let my faith grow dim;
He'll smile—and that's enough for me—
If it's done with a thought of Him.
—Mary Adams Jameson in 'Western Christian Advocate.'

A Word to Girls.

One of Murillo's pictures represents a number of angels in a kitchen engaged in performing ordinary household duties. At first thought, we are disposed to be amused, perhaps, having associated ideas of angels with performing on harps in streets of gold. Few of us would dream of looking into a kitchen to find a company of angels engaged in doing culinary work.

Yet, why not? Is there a more blessed or beautiful ministry than that of serving others in the ordinary ways of life? To be happy, one must be useful; and who can gainsay the usefulness of the young maiden who resolves to make wholesome and happy the atmosphere of her home? Baking bread, serving cake and delicious viands, may not be exactly angelic in its daily routine, but I am sure the bright and healthy mind employed in such labor may find in it a peculiar and enduring pleasure.

I wonder if any who read these words will smile at the homely sentiments expressed and deem it unworthy of their attention. Now, I would not be misunderstood for a single instant, my dear young

girls. Cultivate your minds, store them with useful knowledge, stir up the gift that is in you and make it count for something in this grand world, which possesses such unlimited possibilities. The parable of the ten talents is too familiar to be brought here to your attention. To waste our opportunities is a sin for which we must answer to God in the great day of reckoning.—American paper.

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