

THE HOUSEHOLD.

'DRAWN WORK.'

(By Annette L. Noble.)

I wish there were Keeley cures for confirmed "drawn workers," exclaimed a bright little woman on the piazza of a friend's house.

'What do you mean?' asked her companion, ceasing work on a dainty 'doiley.'

'I do not mean anything personal. But have you noticed, Mrs. Grey, to what a senseless extent this passion for fine needlework has spread among women? I long to circulate a pledge of total abstinence from it. Last week I visited a friend in N—. Her daughter Clara is twenty years old, in good health, a bright, agreeable girl, lately graduated from the high school. N— is a large town, and close by is the city of L—, where are excellent teachers of languages, music, art, kindergarten, physical culture, type-writing, stenography, and all those things in which women are perfecting themselves.

My friend's daughter is devoted to "drawn work." Her mother took me into the parlor and with an air of joyous triumph, displayed Clara's work of the year past. There were three pairs of linen window curtains, with borders over half-a-yard deep, all of drawn work; thousands of drawn threads, millions of stitches—hours, weeks, a whole year's leisure spent over it all!

"Really," said the mother, "nobody can imagine the amount of work! I don't know of another such a set of curtains anywhere."

'I longed to say, "I should hope not." Think of it! They were pretty, but for a few dollars one could buy a set really far more beautiful, if not "hand-made." As I looked at the countless holes and wheels and twisted threads, I thought what Clara might have done in the hours spent over them. She was young and quick to learn, not at all well read, not thoroughly educated. She could almost have mastered a modern language, or in the time could easily have read a small library of the best books of all the ages. The wage-winner of that family is supporting her in comfort, but his large salary is all they have. If he dies suddenly, Clara has—her drawn-work curtains! That year spent in learning some useful occupation, even cooking, would serve her well in a time of need.'

'Oh, yes; but the women who do this elaborate fancy-work often have no other real work to do, and may never need to earn a penny.'

'True; but how much of this work is what it aims to be—really beautiful? You put on your linen sheets and pillow-cases a dainty hem-stitch and a monogram. It is in good taste—I must add that you could buy it just as well done—but the pride of your neighbor's heart is a tablecloth and napkins so senselessly elaborate as to be as downright vulgar on her table as a greatly over-dressed lady would be at that table.'

'But people are apt to go to extremes in everything, and you yourself, Mrs. Hayes, are rather inconsistent. You bought ten yards of knitted lace of a woman in the hospital last week, and you sent Mary Wilson crocheted-needles, thread, and patterns to work from.'

Mrs. Hayes laughed good-naturedly. 'Oh, there are exceptions to every rule. Some such work is pleasant for invalids, and poor ones can earn little comforts for themselves. My cook rejoiced in the atrocious cotton lace. As for Mary Wilson, she is too dull for much brain work. She enjoys her tidies and cushion covers, and nobody knows what all. She spreads them broadcast over her dingy little home, and finds them admirable. I do not quarrel with her, but with those who ought to know that "fancy-work" is not intrinsically worth while. Reform should begin where women take time that, if better invested, would yield so much richer profits; women able to buy prettier articles at shops.'

'Yes, I agree with you; but I have faith enough in my sex to believe we shall soon work ourselves out of this

folly into simpler and more artistic house and home adornments. Some houses on their way to beauty must have infantile ailments as children do. They must break out in a rash of cheap pictures, or experience a run of bric-a-brac, evil enough in the sight of anyone used to ornaments few and good of their sort. Improvement comes later.'

'Let us hope so.'—'American Messenger.'

CODFISH IN VARIOUS WAYS.

The housewife who endeavors to have a variety in the food she places upon her table, may be thankful if none of the members of her family are among those who 'cannot even bear the smell of codfish,' for it forms the base of many appetizing dishes. It is an especial boon to the country housewife during the summer season. The packages of boneless codfish are preferable to the whole fish, more convenient to use, with less of waste, and will not dry out so rapidly. Some of the following recipes are favorites in our family:

Codfish Toast.—Place in a saucepan a generous slice of butter, several small squares of codfish which have been soaked in cold water for an hour or more. Fry until a delicate brown and add rich sweet milk. Let it come to a boil, add pepper, and salt if necessary. Pour this over slices of toasted bread, having a square of codfish for each slice. Or thicken the milk with a tablespoon of cornstarch rubbed smooth in a little cold milk. In this case the toast must be softened by dipping in boiling salted water.

Codfish a La Mode.—One cup of codfish picked up fine, two cups of mashed potatoes, one pint of rich sweet milk, two well-beaten eggs, a scant half-cup of butter, salt and pepper; mix well, bake in a baking dish twenty or twenty-five minutes.

Codfish Cakes.—Use one-third finely shredded fish to two-thirds mashed potatoes. Place the fish in a saucepan, cover with cold water, let come to a boil and simmer five minutes, drain and add a piece of butter. While hot, mix well with the potatoes. Add a well-beaten egg. Shape into flat cakes by using a little flour. Place in hot butter or meat drippings, brown on both sides and serve hot. These make a good breakfast dish and may be made into cakes the previous evening.

Codfish and Cream.—Pick the codfish into bits and soak in cold water for two hours. Drain, pour on a pint or more of sweet milk and place on the stove where it will slowly simmer; cook gently for ten minutes, add to it a tablespoon of flour mixed smooth, and a half-cup of sweet cream; let boil for a moment, remove from the stove and stir in the beaten yolks of two eggs. Serve hot.

Mock Oyster Soup.—Place a tea-cup of shredded codfish in a quart or more of cold water on the stove. Let simmer half-an-hour, add a pint of stewed tomatoes, and a very little saleratus. Boil five minutes, add a quart of sweet milk, a slice of butter, salt and pepper. When it reaches the boiling point it is ready to serve with crackers or croutons.

Broiled Salt Cod.—Soak nice white strips of the fish for several hours in cold water; dry them with a cloth, and lay them over clear hot coals on a broiler that has been rubbed with suet. Brown the fish nicely on both sides, remove to a hot platter and lay upon each piece a little fresh butter. A fringe of fried potatoes is a good accompaniment. Codfish is good boiled, but it should be well soaked out and be allowed to simmer for two or three hours. It may be served with drawn butter; hard-boiled eggs sliced on it, make a fine addition.—'Housekeeper.'

REMEMBER THE ANNIVERSARIES.

(By Carrie May Ashton.)

'We can't afford to do anything for birthdays at our house,' said a tired, hollow-eyed woman to a friend. 'The times are too hard, and it's all we can do to just live.' As I hastened on my way I contrasted the difference between a friend who, although in straitened circumstances, never allowed a holiday or birthday to pass by unremembered. Few of us are able to

purchase expensive gifts for our loved ones, but even the poorest can make something that will gladden the hearts of the little ones.

When the birthdays and wedding anniversaries come round, let there be a little air of festivity. It will not cost much to make a white cake—or any other will answer just as well—and ice it all over. Perhaps it can be ornamented with a wreath or bunch of flowers, or as many candles as the recipient is years old. It is by no means the people of wealth who make their children the happiest. The simplest gifts that come within the reach of all of us are frequently the most prized.

What can be more welcome to the housewife living in the city, than a jar of golden butter fresh from the farm, a pair of plump chickens, or a basket of eggs? To a dear shut-in there can be nothing more acceptable than a pot of growing ferns, a plant in bloom, or some sea mosses mounted in a little booklet. To the brothers and sisters, sons and daughters who are away at school and often long for home cooking, there is nothing more welcome than a box of goodies—a roasted fowl, a cake, some canned fruit and jelly.

'I never had a birthday present in my life,' said a woman of thirty to a friend, when shown some lovely gifts sent her upon her birthday by thoughtful friends. It is very sad to me to know how many people neglect these little things. They cannot know how much they are losing of life's beauty and sweetness. When our children go out from the home roof tree to do battle with the world, these home festivals will have a lasting influence on them through life. How much it means to the business man or woman, to the patient, weary wife and mother, to know that the good old mother never forgets them, and as the birthdays roll around, some gift, fashioned oftentimes by her own fingers, finds its way to them. It richly pays to remember these little things, trifles though they are. Is there not enough of sorrow and sadness in this world, and should not each of us do our share in making it happier?

If every wedding anniversary were remembered in some way, no matter how simple, there would be more happiness in the home life. A bunch of flowers, a new book or picture costs but little; but oh, how much it means to the wife who has tried so hard to do her part.—'Agriculturist.'

WHERE THE BOY SLEEPS.

It generally happens that the bedrooms in a farmhouse are large and pleasant. Yet for economical reasons, the boy of the household is allowed to sleep with the farm hand, or, at least, to share his room. This room is apt to be over the kitchen, and is generally the most uncomfortable one in the house, especially in summer. The housewife seldom thinks about the matter at all; she is simply following accepted customs, and lessening her labors by making one bed instead of two. She forgets how very greatly children are influenced by the older people, with whom they are brought in such close relations. To say nothing of the physical risk of allowing a boy to share the room of a man who generally smokes the worst kind of tobacco and is not too dainty in his personal habits, there is that greater risk of moral contagion. Very often these farm hands are men of whose antecedents the farmer and his wife know nothing. Some of them are driftwood from the vilest elements of the city, 'tramping' through the country. While the parents sleep, the boy is listening to all sorts of wickedness. Highly-colored stories of city life, and adventures of all doubtful kinds are told so alluringly that often the first seeds of discontent with farm life are sown in the boy's mind. The best bedrooms of the home should be enjoyed by the members of the household, not slept in at rare intervals by people for whose physical and moral well-being the housewife is not responsible. The farmer's boy is apt to be careless in his personal habits, because he is not taught to be particular in caring for household furnishings or his own belongings. Everything is locked up; there is no education, but simple prohibition. By giving him a room to him-

self, with all the accessories of a neat toilette, he will not only learn to be particular in his personal habits, the first of all requisites to a healthy condition of living, but will be saved from one dangerous source of disease in farm life—the use in common by all the members of the household of one wash-bowl and towel.

In the very heart of sunshine, where there are no piles of brick and stone to shut out the light and air, a house is suffered to become full of disease germs. This simple fact accounts for what is called the mysterious fatality of fevers in our farming communities. The effect of darkness and bad air upon children is quite as disastrous as upon plants, with this difference: the mental and moral well-being of the children suffer, as well as their bodies. How can you expect a child to be cheerful and free from morbid fancies if you force him to spend the most susceptible years of his life in a gloomy house foul with vitiated air? If the farmer's wife wants to have sweet, wholesome children, she must open her closed shutters and air every room, whether used or not, at least once a day.—'Ladies' Home Journal.'

HOUSEHOLD MATTERS.

There is one thing that ought to be banished from every house; something so unclean that I do not like to even mention it, and that is the kitchen slop-pail. There is absolutely no need of one, and it is an almost certain sign of a poor and wasteful housekeeper. Waste water should be carried out at once, in a covered tin pail, and the pail washed out and left in the sun and air to purify, uncovered; vegetable peelings and other refuse ought to be put in a clean, covered basket, lined with thick paper, and set out doors. Kitchen refuse kept dry is practically harmless; thrown into a pail of water to putrefy, it will poison the air with noxious gases. The complaint fashionably called 'malaria,' is often but another name for uncleanness in the kitchen. Every woman in charge of a house ought to have a knowledge of the purifying effects of fresh air and sunshine drilled into her somehow.

There should never be a cellar nor a kitchen closet built without a door or window opening directly into the open air.

Damp, musty, underground holes cause diphtheria and typhoid fever, and there ought to be a law authorizing health officers to fill them up or suppress them in some way. Why should people be allowed to introduce those two dread diseases into a neighborhood any more than they would be allowed to spread small-pox or the plague? If they must become pests and make pest-houses of their dwellings, then they should be tethered off out in the woods somewhere by themselves.—'Woman-kind.'

FOR THE KITCHEN.

Among the many new inventions shown at Chicago, and appreciated by housekeepers, was a kneading-board of polished metal with patent attachments. The best of all is one of marble, but this is so heavy it would be better to have a stationary marble-top table in the kitchen. The wooden kneading-board is said to be a harbinger of germs and microbes, and it is almost an impossibility to keep these boards chemically clean. A tin rolling-pin has much to recommend it in the way of lightness, cleanness and freedom from sticking. Chopping trays, potato-mashers and other wooden utensils for kitchen use, have excellent substitutes in one of the metals or minerals. If frying-pans must be used long after they should be thrown away, vinegar and salt will clean off the crust which has formed, but they should be thoroughly scoured afterward with sand-soap or any good scouring soap. Borax should be used more than it is in the kitchen. As a cleansing and softening agent, it has an advantage over sal-soda, for it does not tarnish the color or eat into a substance. A tablespoonful in a kettle of water will make tins as good as new, if they are allowed to boil in it for an hour or two.