

THE HOUSEHOLD.

FOR A WEB BEGUN.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

'For a web begun, God sends the thread,
Over and over these words I read,
And I said to myself, with an easy air:
'What need to burden myself with care,
If this be true?
Or attempt to do
More than my duty? For here is proof
That we are to hold ourselves aloof
Until from the Master we receive
The thread for the web we are to weave.'

So day after day, I sat beside
The loom, as if both my hands were tied,
With idle shuttle and slackened warp,
Useless as 'strings' of an untuned harp.

For I took no part,
With hand or heart
In the work of the world. 'To the cry of need,
The voice of children, I gave no heed.
'When the task is ready for me,' I said,
'God will be sure to supply the thread.'

Others might go in collars and slums
And weave a web out of scraps and thrums,
Finding excuse for the daily toil,
The reckless waste of life's precious oil;
But as for me,
I could not see.

How I was to follow them, or believe
That the rightful pattern I'd truly weave,
Unless I waited, how'er time sped,
For God to send me the promised thread.

I had no strength of my own I knew,
No wisdom to guide, or skill to do,
And must wait at ease for the word of com-
mand,

For the message I surely should understand,
Else all in vain
Were the stress and strain,
For the thread would break, and the web be
spoiled,

A poor result for the hours I'd toiled,
And my heart and my conscience would be at
strife

O'er the broken threads of a wasted life.

But all at once, like a gem exhumed,
The word 'begun'—by a light illumed—
From the rest of the text stood boldly out,
By the finger of God revealed no doubt,
And shocked and dazed,
Ashamed, amazed,

I saw, as I had not seen before,
The true meaning the sentence bore,
And read as Belthazar might have read:
'For a web begun, God sends the thread.'

The man himself, with his mind and heart,
Toward the Holy City must make a start,
Ere he finds in his hands the mystic clew
That shall lead him life's mazes safely through.

And if loom and reel
And spinning-wheel
Idle and empty stand to-day,
We must reason give for the long delay.
Since the voice of the Master has plainly said:
'For a web begun, God sends the thread.'

CHRIST IN THE HOME.

Like many another wife and mother, Mrs. Hanscom found that increasing cares and responsibilities in the family bore hard on sensitive nerves, sensitive feelings, and spirits that were naturally a little too easily ruffled and irritated. Yet like the great majority of women she was an ardent home-lover, a devoted companion and parent, and a sincere Christian. Taking up her religious paper one day she read the following words: 'We wonder how many men and women enter the sanctuary on Sunday morning expecting and intending to take back with them to their homes that which will help them to keep Christ in the household throughout the week!' So manifest had the want of some strong help become to her of late, that Mr. Hanscom gave special heed to the simple inquiry. She had never thought of listening to that sermon with just that motive before. Eager for anything that would prove of real help in the midst of absorbing and oftentimes perplexing cares, it became an immediate resolve to pick something distinctive out of the next discourse it would be her privilege to hear, and put it in a safe niche of memory to be dwelt upon at need during the week following. The sermon bore upon the responsibility of individuals at large in their dealings with their fellow men the next Sunday, and Mrs. Hanscom was beginning to fear that exactly what she wanted was not forthcoming when the minister repeated im-

pressively the words of Paul to the Colossians, 'And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord.' 'I'll take that home,' she thought, 'and after all there's nothing like the dear old Bible for real helpfulness, search where one may.' Things glided along in the usual way, nothing occurring to call for particular strength of resistance until Thursday, when 'everything came together in a heap,' as Lois the dusky skinned servant expressed it. And first, Davie and Helen wanted a loaf of nice cake to take to the sociable at the vestry, it being the quarterly meeting of the Y. P. S. C. E., when a supper was usually served. It was imperative, Helen thought, that a dress which needed finishing touches at her mother's skilful fingers should be ready by evening. Little Carl was fretful in consequence of having passed a restless, bilious night, and to cap the climax, Mr. Hanscom on the way to his office in the morning slipped and fell against a box placed outside a grocer's store, tearing a zigzag rent in his overcoat on a protruding nail.

Here indeed was a complication of duties calling for diligence, patience and forbearance. Mr. Hanscom in extreme aggravation at having his nice overcoat so ruthlessly defaced, talked as persons are apt to under strong provocation. Any one entering the house and knowing nothing of the real facts, would have supposed the entire family to blame for the mishap. Lois, thinking herself 'put upon' in being asked to make an extra loaf of frosted cake, declared she should have no time; any one who had might make it and welcome. Where to begin and how to manage set the poor little woman all of a tremble. It was so unsatisfactory trying to mend a man's coat, yet it was a compliment that her husband thought no one else could begin to make the rent look as nearly invisible as she could. Then the blessed text came into her mind, and she determined to set about doing heartily and willingly the bothersome piece of work. 'As to the Lord!' 'If I could do actual service repairing a garment for the Saviour!' she thought, smiling at the idea, 'how would I bend to the task, so lovingly, so ardently, with such fond ambition to do my very utmost.'

At that she began to sing, and having placed Carl on the bed with his playthings around him, she sang on, mending away meanwhile the very best she could. Then it occurred to her that several little jars had taken place of late in consequence of Lois' independence and unwillingness to perform the least extra labor. She reflected that Lois had been treated with the greatest kindness but only to grow more surly and unwilling. 'I'll go heartily to work getting another girl,' she next thought, 'unless Lois can be more faithful in her department.' Going to the kitchen with an untroubled, placid face, she firmly but pleasantly told the girl that unless she could serve her less grudgingly and really help when help was most needed, she wanted her at once to find another place, and she would supply herself with a more desirable girl. It surprised her to find how free from anxiety she felt on returning to her work. When she went to the kitchen to press the neat work Lois was in tears, saying she never wanted a better place or a kinder mistress. Miss Helen's cake was in the oven, and she was sure the frosting was going to be 'remarkably fine.'

'I should think you liked to mend torn coats,' Davy had remarked, finding his mother telling Carl a droll story with the heavy overcoat in her lap.

'No, my boy, I am simply striving to do it heartily,' she replied.

Evening found a quiet, pleasant household entirely at peace with itself. The different duties had all been performed. Cheerfulness, firmness, and trustfulness had smoothed the way through various difficulties. Among her Christmas and New Year gifts Mrs. Hanscom had two or three little books with texts for each day's help selected. She resolved to read one every morning. Need it be added she found blessed and continued strength supplied through taking one with her—a silent companion and comforter through the succeeding weeks? The influence of Christ in the home, a constant, present aid always near, helped and cheered and steadied her as no earthly friend could have done. And

this is the dear, powerful friend who wants to aid every one. Why not court His presence in the every-day home life? He needs only to be asked, and his hearty help is close at hand.

'Be Thou my strength, O lowly One and saintly!
And though unvisioned ills around me throng,
Yet in the thought of Thee I will be strong.'
—*Christian at Work.*

THE GUEST-CHAMBER.

Air and light in summer, warmth and air in winter, and comfort the whole year through, are the requirements of the ideal guest chamber. Here should be a bed, springy, cool, soft, but not too soft, with elastic mattress, clean sweet-smelling linen, to accommodate the tired or sleepy head. In the matter of pillows tastes differ, and where one person prefers a hard pillow another person yearns for a downy one, or one likes a large while another can sleep well only on a small pillow. Bolsters which suggest the uncomfortable head-rests of the Japanese are of use for nothing but show. They cannot be slept upon; and a bed, whether elegant or the reverse, is primarily intended for sleeping upon. This should always be considered.

Even in summer no bed is properly furnished without a pair of soft fleecy woollen blankets, which should invariably be put on with the open fold at the top, so that one thickness may be thrown off if desirable. An extra wrap should lie on the bed's foot. When the maid turns down the bed-clothes at night, removing all spreads and shams if those are favored by the house-keeper, she should place the soft duvet, which may be needed before morning, where the occupant of the bed can easily get it at will.

The bureau in the guest chamber will always have a drawer or two empty and at the service of the guest. So should there be ordinary pins, both black and white, with a supply of sheet pins in both colors and several sizes, sewing materials too, for the guest may need to make some slight repairs, and have not the materials at hand to do it.

Abundance of water is a comfort not to be foregone in any sleeping-room, and should certainly be provided in that of a guest. A good quality of toilet soap should be provided, and plenty of fresh towels, and these should be replenished daily, the soiled ones removed, and their places taken by those which are clean and smoothly ironed.

For the rest, a closet or wardrobe where the guest may hang her gowns and her bonnet, a lounge, an easy-chair, and a few books will make the chamber attractive. There ought, if possible, to be a picture or two on the walls, writing materials should be supplied, a pitcher of ice-water taken up every night—in brief, nothing neglected which will conduce to the guest's pleasure or repose.

Do not let the children romp or cry in halls when the visitor is taking an afternoon nap, and do not forget that a few bright sweet flowers in a little vase will carry messages of love you may be too shy or too modest to speak except in their syllables.—*Harper's Bazar.*

THE TREATMENT OF BURNS.

Every little while one reads some exhaustive treatise on the treatment of burns and scalds, and treatise almost always ending up with the recommendation to use lime-water and oil. While there may be somewhere in medical science some excellent reason for the employment of this compound, one cannot but wonder how such a curious mixture ever came into favor. One might die from exhaustion, from pain, before either of these ingredients could be procured and properly prepared for use; besides, not everyone understands managing them. Why not use a remedy within the reach of everyone, something that almost every pantry affords and which has been thoroughly tested and found in every way to answer all the demands of a remedy? At the very first possible moment grasp a handful of lard, such as is used for cooking purposes, and smear it over the burned surface. This answers until the regular remedy can be prepared, which consists simply of a paste of flour and lard made as soft as it can be handled. This is spread about half an inch thick upon a cloth and applied to the injured parts.

Let it remain until it begins to crumble, which can be readily ascertained by raising the corner of the cloth. The application must then be renewed, great care being necessary in taking off the old plaster that the surface of the skin is not broken. If it sticks at any point, it is much better to leave it than to run any risk of irritating the hurt and possibly causing a deep sore. The number of applications will depend upon the nature of the burn. Sometimes it is necessary to renew the plaster a dozen times, and it is worth while to do this if the burn is deep. In other cases one or two will be quite sufficient. The burned flesh absorbs all of the oil from the plaster, and the flour serves to keep the air from it and, if carefully managed, there will scarcely be any pain after the lard is put on.

It is sometimes desirable to give a soothing mixture and allow the patient to sleep, for burns are extremely exhausting, and great care should be taken with the diet, and every effort made to keep the system in a state of repose.

If a very large surface is injured, there is danger to life, but this may almost always be avoided by the immediate application of the lard. It is safe to assert that the average of fatal cases could be reduced more than half in this course of treatment were persisted in. Cases have been known where very large surfaces have been deeply burned, and the patient has recovered without leaving a scar when treated this way. Drugs and chemicals are best left alone in such emergencies, simple treatment, absolute quiet and a moderate amount of plain, nourishing food almost always insuring a safe and speedy recovery.—*Jenness Miller.*

HOW TO COOK SALT PORK.

To make it an attractive dish, slice moderately thin and even; soak over night in plenty of cold water, if very fat; roll it in flour and fry a light brown. Serve on a plate free from the grease. Never send it to the table swimming in grease. If there are streaks of lean, soak over night in milk and water, and omit the flour when you fry it. Served in either way it never fails to be eaten in our house.—*Eveline Pine.*

GRASS STAINS.

Molasses rubbed on grass stains on white dresses and under garments, will bring out the stains when the clothing is washed.

RECIPES.

HANDY PUDDING.—Fill a well-greased pudding-dish with fruit, fresh or canned; cover with a rich, sweetened, biscuit dough. Serve with or without cream or other sauce.

CODFISH BALLS.—One pint of well-washed codfish, picked up fine; one quart of raw potatoes, cut in bits. Boil together till done. Drain, mash, and add two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, two well-beaten eggs, and pepper. Mix thoroughly and drop, like fritters, into boiling fat. Garnish with lettuce, parsley, or other green leaf.

Who has ever tried serving lemon cut in slices with the tea? This is a healthful drink and gives a delicious flavor; in using lemon, of course milk must be omitted. Let the slices of lemon be very thin; the shaving of peel and pulp is sufficient; for an ordinary cup use just enough to correct the flavor and not injure the taste.

STEWED ELDERBERRIES.—To two quarts of clean, fresh elderberries, add one-half a pint of good vinegar and sugar to taste. Simmer gently half an hour. These will keep well, if canned for winter use.

RHUBARB TART.—Scrape the stalks, cut into small bits and stew in a very little water. When tender take from the fire and sweeten. Have ready some open shells of pastry, freshly baked. Fill with the fruit and sift sugar on top. Eat warm or cold, never hot.

SALT aids other solvents, as benzene, ammonia or alcohol, in removing grease spots, and gives a brilliant white light if a little is dissolved in kerosene.

ORANGE ICE.—One and one-half pints of sugar, three pints of water, the juice of eighteen medium-sized oranges and two large lemons. Boil the sugar and water thirty minutes. Strain the orange juice and add to the other mixture after it has become lukewarm. When cold freeze like ice cream.

CHUTNEY SAUCE.—Take twelve green sour apples two green peppers, six green tomatoes, four onions, one cupful of raisins, a quart of vinegar, two tablespoonfuls each of mustard seed and salt, and one of powdered sugar, and two cupfuls of brown sugar. Seed the raisins and peppers, then add tomatoes and onions and chop very fine. Put the vinegar, sugar and spices on to boil, add the chopped mixture and simmer one hour. Then add the apples, pared and cored, and cook slowly until soft. Seal in small bottles. An excellent East Indian relish.