

THE HOUSEHOLD.

CHILDREN AT TABLE.

BY HELENA H. THOMAS.

My heart goes out in sympathy to mothers whose visits are spoiled by the bad behavior of their children at table. Many a time I have forgotten ruined tablecloth and broken dishes in sympathy with the discomfiture of mothers as they witnessed the bad behavior of their children. Of course they always say 'They behave so much worse when away from home.' That may sometimes be the case, but does not the real fault lie with the mother in not teaching her children 'company manners' at home?

A mother with her three little boys recently dined with me. As they belong to a humble station in life, I concluded that they would be wholly lacking in table manners, so I prepared for them by putting large napkins under their plates and a crumb-cloth under the table.

The boys were strangers to me, but they at once won my heart by their gentlemanly manners. The youngest was five, and small of his age, but he was quite as manly as his oldest brother, who was eight.

Though the dining-room door stood invitingly open while dinner was being prepared, those children seemed utterly unconscious of it, never once whispering to their mother—for the benefit of their hostess—'I'm hungry.' When dinner was announced they stood back and waited for the older ones to pass out, and then quietly took the places assigned to them. They showed no eagerness to be served, and were marvels of good behavior while eating. Indeed few grown people could excel the good breeding they showed from the beginning to the end of the meal. I blushed for those unnecessary napkins under their plates, for they were spotless when they arose from the table.

I was so charmed with those children that a little later I asked their mother to let them visit me alone, for I wanted to become better acquainted with them. I will admit that I also had a curiosity to see how they would behave without their mother's eye upon them.

They came; and the second visit was but a repetition of the first—with the exception of food and 'napkins under their plates.' Really I almost forgot to eat in watching the dainty ways of those boys. I said to the 'baby,' who insisted on spreading his bread and butter, and then ate of it so deliberately, 'Aren't you afraid we will eat all the good things up?' 'O no,' he said sweetly. 'I always eat slow: mamma says it's only pigs that eat fast.'

When next I saw the mother of those model boys, I said 'You alone seem to possess the secret of training children in perfect table manners.' Then I frankly told her of the trials I had had with the children of 'society' people, and what a glad surprise her well trained little ones were to me. Then I laughingly told her that it was her duty to take her children around the country and exhibit them, and tell other mothers her method.

'Well,' said the mother, 'it was not born in them I assure you, but I will tell you how I managed with them, and then you may use my experience as you like.'

'My husband was very carefully reared in the old country, even if we are poor, and the table manners of the common people here, greatly distressed him; especially the children of my brother who often visited us after we were married. The way they crammed their food, and the muss they made, distressed him, so that I determined when my own little ones came they should be models of good behavior at the table, if no where else. But I had not undertaken an easy task. It was constantly "Don't eat so fast, and don't, don't don't!" In their eagerness to get their share they forgot all else.'

'I nearly gave up in despair for a time. My boys, like all boys, longed to grow fast, be "men," so at last a happy thought struck me. I bought a "child's physiology," and read it to them, then I explained to them that their food was to make strong bodied "men" of them, but that in order to keep well and strong, their stomachs must only have their own work to do, and that their teeth must do their part faith-

fully. I made it clear to them how their food must be eaten slowly, and chewed well, so that the saliva might be able to mix with it. And that if they swallowed it in a hurry and did not let the saliva do its work, the stomach must do double duty, which would retard their health and growth, etc.

'Why, that book was worth its weight in gold to me. It did what years of careful training had not done. It taught them to eat slowly, and the rest was easy enough.'

'When they "forgot," I took them to my neighbor's piggery, and drew a moral from the greedy pig, so that all the reminder the children needed was "pigs or gentlemen?"'

'Well, you see the result; it took time, and patience, but I tell you it is a comfort to think I can trust them anywhere now.'

Mothers, is her plan not worth trying?—*Christian at Work.*

SMALL COMFORTS.

Does it appear wise to despise the small solace and refreshments of life when they come naturally in our way? Is it not better judgment to accept whatever of cheer may be legitimately ours? While there is so much suffering in life which we have to bear, and which it is right we should endure uncomplainingly, it seems as if we might go further than this. We may say we ought to take special pains to cultivate a habit of finding delight and satisfaction in little pleasantnesses, and to contrive ways of giving ourselves ease in little things. The warmth of a room, the rest of a footstool, the help of some invention for doing a piece of work, are right to take and wise to plan for and take pains to secure.

So, looking to her season's comfort as well as her season's edification, the prudent housewife will see that hooks and shelves are in easy, handy positions, and in plentiful number. She will see that drawers pull out without sticking, and that windows may be raised and lowered without straining her muscles. She will insist that her shutters shut tightly without too great effort, and stay open without slamming. Her utensils for all sorts of work will be of the best kind, abundant, and in convenient spots for instant use.

And this same prudent housewife will think of little methods of helping herself and giving occasional rest to her body, and thereby quietness to her soul. She will keep a memorandum sheet, with lists of wants for kitchen, dining-room, sewing-room, and parlor. She has places for everything, because by so doing she knows just where to find them without spending time in the search. She takes time to enjoy every trifling gratification that comes in her path. Her creed teaches her that the pleasant things of life were put there for this purpose, and that she is unthankful who turns persistently away from the lovely every-day small pleasures God has scattered so profusely along the road.

STITCHES IN TIME.

There is so much need of saving every moment possible for the 'better things' that come into a life when one belongs to the army of housekeepers that I risk the chance of repeating what you have heard before, in jotting down a few suggestions from my own limited experience.

A wringer can have every particle of color removed from its rubber rollers, by the simple means of coal oil. Wash with a small cloth dipped in coal oil, then with soap-suds.

The whisk broom is available in many ways. A small one makes a clothes-sprinkler. I used one in cleaning the wood-work in my large rooms. There were many crevices cut in bases and in panelling under the window-seats; and with clear cold water and a whisk I made them clean in a remarkably short time; and, though warned that I would ruin the graining I found the paint entirely uninjured by the process. I sweep the walls and ceilings, and the stairs with a whisk. I also clean wooden or tin utensils that need scouring, (particularly a hideous square churn invented by some evil genius) with a stiff whisk. I apply paste to wall-paper with a whisk, and stroke it down on the walls with another with long soft bristles. I keep

one always on the stove shelf to keep my cooking stove clean.

I find it saves time to make memoranda of various kinds, and in my kitchen have a hook to hold a list of rainy-day jobs, odd jobs for leisure minutes for the farm-men, work for the domestic, work for myself. If callers are announced and I leave my machine-work, I have only to look over my list, and am instantly reminded of a little trifle that can be accomplished while I chat with my guest. I firmly believe it to be an infringement on our privileges to maintain the current belief that a hostess' hand must be idle in order to 'do the polite' to her guest. Many precious minutes can be saved in this way, and the guest will not fail, if she be of average intelligence to appreciate the motive. If she be not of that class, certainly it is not worth one's while to spend a single moment idly for her sake.

If there is a box for old silks and ribbons, one for lining materials, and others for various articles, time is saved in bringing to light all the different things needed in making or repairing. I find much repairing can be done on the machine, and surely if time is precious, the gain in beauty to a pair of patched overalls or knit drawers, isn't worth spending an unnecessary half hour. Rip the seam on both sides of the leg of the overalls, cut out the worn knee, set in a new piece, sew up the seams, and the tedious work is quickly done, without touching any needle save the one in the machine. Patches on knit goods should be held firmly, stretching as one sews, and with the tension rather loose, so that shrinkage will not draw the patch. Hose cut over for children, I was taught to make by hand, and a preciously dull task it was to me. I now make them on the machine, using a short stitch and loose tension, stretching the seam as I sew. They do not rip either. If an inventor would show us how to sew on buttons, my life would doubtless be prolonged to a good old age.

I consider it my duty not to let pen and brush lie idle, not to drop my reading, to the end that by-and-by the babies of to-day will not be the women of to-morrow whose speech I cannot understand, because, while they moved on, I lingered behind to do in the old way what costs me the loss of their companionship in the life they are forced through their school-training to live.—*E. M. G. H.*

HINTS ON LAUNDRY-WORK.

'Every laundress fancies she has her own best way of doing things,' said a veteran housekeeper; 'but during a long life of experiment I have learned a few easy ways of doing things, and, unless my laundress is hopelessly set in her way, I can generally give her some advice that will be of a good deal of use to her.'

'In the first place, I have learned that it saves work and clothes and time and trouble to put my washing to soak the evening or the day before. It is but little work in the morning to prepare a quantity of hot water for this purpose. I melt a bar of soap and add about a pint of naphtha to it and a gallon of water. These are thoroughly beaten, and with this all the soiled portions of the clothes are rubbed. The pieces are then rolled tightly and packed into the tub until all are gone over. The towels, especially those used about the kitchen or those that are much soiled, are put into a separate basin, after having been saturated with this preparation. I fill the tub up with water as warm as the hands can be borne in it, cover it with a thick cloth and let it stand until the next day. It rarely occupies me more than half an hour to do this preliminary work. Next morning, the least-soiled pieces are rubbed out with very little labor and thrown into a suds as hot as can be handled. They are then washed lightly through and put into a boiler of boiling water in which a pint of the same preparation as that used for soaking the clothes has been put. I never leave them in the boil over a minute, but the water must be not merely scalding but boiling. They are then taken out and thoroughly rinsed in two waters and wrung as little as possible and put upon the line. I have found it desirable to have a piece of white oilcloth in the bottom of my clothes-baskets to prevent the water from the clothes running through, as they are drip-

ping sometimes when hung out. I find that they are much whiter and have that delightful odor of cleanliness which is the most exquisite of all perfumes. I think that long boiling makes clothes yellow, and certainly it does not remove spots or stains. It is well worth while if one can do so, to put clothes on the grass in the spring. It clears them out and seems to freshen them up for the whole season.

'Washing is by no means as hard work as many people think it, always provided that one brings brains as well as hands into the labor.'—*New York Ledger.*

POTS AND PANS.

When you are furnishing your pantry bear in mind that it is sometimes poor economy to save money. Be a little lavish in pots and pans, bowls and spoons. Your strength is your capital. Do not squander it by doing without what you need in the way of utensils, or wear yourself out washing them again and again in the course of one morning's work because you have an over-scant supply of necessary vessels.

There are plenty of homes where the abundant food served on handsome china is prepared by the cook with the greatest difficulty because of insufficient utensils. A visit to such kitchens would reveal makeshifts that are usually associated with poverty. Cakes and puddings mixed in soup-tureen or vegetable dish in default of regular mixing-bowls, bread set to rise in a dish-pan for lack of a bread-bowl, left-overs set away in the handsome china dishes in which they came from the table because there are not kitchen plates and cups to hold them, worn-out chopping-bowls, leaky measuring-cups, dented and dingy tins, and a general 'down-at-heel' condition of affairs.

This is not always the fault of the mistress. Often it happens that she has provided all the essentials and the carelessness of her servants has brought about the dearth and disorder. Unless she goes into the kitchen regularly, and looks well to the ways of her pantries, she must expect that loss and breakage will pass unreported. The woman who does more or less of her own cooking will be spared this annoyance, at least.

The best ware for pots and pans is usually of agate, although it is difficult to find a make that will not crack or scale. The blue porcelain-lined vessels are always pretty and clean-looking. Of these or the agate should be the double boilers, the double-bottomed saucepans, the frying-kettle, the pudding dishes, and sundry other equally useful vessels. Have an omelet-pan as well as a frying-pan, a waffle-iron as well as a griddle, muffin-tins as well as biscuit-bowls. And, above all, do not stint yourself in the matter of bowls. Have of big bowls one or two, of medium-sized bowls three or four, and of small bowls as many as your financial conscience will allow you to get. They are cheap, they take up little room, are easily kept clean, and are always useful, not only for mixing small quantities, for beating an egg or two, but for holding a spoonful of this or half a cupful of that remnant.

Be lavish also in spoons for mixing and for measuring, and in knives of various sizes for cutting meat and bread, for paring apples and potatoes. Have a split spoon for taking croquettes and fritters from the boiling fat, meat-forks, cake-turners, and a palette-knife for lifting and turning an omelet. Provide yourself with a board to cut the bread upon, with a paint-brush to grease cake-tins, with an iron-handled dish-cloth for cleaning pots and pans, with a long-handled mop, a vegetable-grater, a cheese-grater, a vegetable press, a gravy-strainer, a long-nosed pitcher for griddle-cake batter, and more than one egg-beater.—*Harper's Bazar.*

RECIPES.

CREAM SAUCE.—Melt one tablespoonful of butter without browning, add one tablespoonful of flour, mix until smooth; add one cup of milk and stir continually until it thickens. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

TREACLE APPLE PIE.—This was a great favorite in our childhood days, and was always very popular. Make a crust as for an ordinary pie, but a little thicker. Fill a deep pie-dish very full with juicy sour apples; pour on a liberal supply of treacle, and cover, being careful to pinch the crust down very closely at the edges that none of the syrup may escape. Bake rather slowly; too rapid baking will make the juice boil out in the oven. When cold, eat with milk or cream.