

## HOUSEHOLD.

### The Pity of It.

(By Mary Louise Palmer, in 'Christian Union'.)

Many people have money, strength, time, and patience, but consume these valuable possessions much more than they might, all because they do not have common, everyday belongings convenient, near at hand.

I am acquainted with a family whose yearly income is large. They live in a fine house, ride behind a handsome pair of horses, dress well, and to all appearances are well-to-do as a family. But the opposite of this is in a measure true.

The mother is habitually tired, father inclined to moroseness, and children in some degree, combine the two. And I attribute a portion of the family discomfort and ill-temper, to inconvenience of common things.

The mother might have hired help, the cash-box would admit, but girls soon leave. They say, 'Things are so unhandy I cannot stay,' and the tired mother plods on alone. Perhaps she does not know the thorn that is piercing her side, and I have never seen my way clear to call her attention to the truth.

It may be my duty at the risk of incurring her displeasure, and being told to go my way and attend to my own affairs. My heart aches for my poor neighbor as I see her ascending and descending a flight of steps that leads from her back kitchen door to the ground. It is a weary way. All her wood, water, and coal must be brought into the house up these steps. Her cellar-kitchen, where she does full half her work, is below them.

To prepare one meal she must go up and down many times, for she cooks below stairs, while her dining-room is above. She has no convenient bedroom, on the floor of the living-rooms, and therefore must ascend to the second or rather third story of the house, for the basement is the first, strictly speaking. Her sleeping-room is on this third floor. Here she keeps her wearing apparel and most of her personal belongings. Here she must go whenever she wishes to dress, slip on a tea-gown, or make some slighter change.

How convenient if a large airy sleeping-room opened from the dining-room, which is common sitting-room also. A clothes-press and small closet where all common clothing at least could be kept, could open from it.

Here the tired woman could retreat without mounting another set of steps. A lounge could be placed here and the weary body rest, and would rest much oftener than if obliged to use the bed always.

It is an excellent plan in the home-furnishings, and household economy of saving mother, to have a lounge placed in mother's room. What a pity their fine house had not been planned with this end in view. But all the sleeping rooms are above.

She has three sons; their rooms are above, so more ascending and descending stairs must be done to accomplish the daily chamber work. Round and round, above and below, goes the poor woman, never rested from one day to another—at least this is her story—hence always tired. Will it be strange if she dies prematurely of exhaustion?

What a pity some of the surplus money could not be converted into comfort and physical happiness!

### An Inexpensive Hotbed.

There was no one who had time or inclination to help about making a hotbed out of doors, and it was deemed absolutely necessary to start a few early plants. Experience has demonstrated that a large number of plants may be grown in a very small space, and a novel idea presented itself. There was in the store-room a worn-out, rusted-out kitchen sink. This was filled with earth fine and mellow and carefully sifted to make it as light and soft as possible. The seeds were planted, the sink was placed on a large box, and inside of the box a lighted lamp was put with the flame just high enough to prevent smoking. It was a small lamp and consumed but little oil, but it furnished the bottom heat

that makes plant-growing a success. Almost before one could be aware the seeds pushed their tiny leaves up to the light, and the roots crept down to find the warmth. The drainage was excellent and all conditions seemed favorable. When the plants were well up and established less water was given and stronger, more stocky plants were never planted out from an indoors nursery to an open garden. Large-sized galvanized pans are not at all expensive and are very manageable. When first planted a number of them may be stacked one above another with cross sticks to keep them separate. If they are kept in the dark it will be quite as well, as the roots will grow faster than the tops and furnish a most excellent start in life.—New York 'Ledger.'

### Let in the Sunshine.

Are the health and lives of your family less dear to your thifty heart than the freshness of carpets or curtains? We may be certain that a really intelligent person, when driving about any locality whatever, will form a correct idea of the mental status of the housekeepers along the road. Except in midsummer if he sees shades drawn and blinds closed in living and sleeping rooms, he will conclude that, however intelligent housekeepers are in regard to current topics, they are ignorant of the science of life and health, that absolutely proves that the absence of sunshine gives the best conditions for the germs of malaria, diphtheria, typhoid, and consumption. It also lowers the whole tone of the bodily health and induces melancholy. Builders often, too, even architects, show their lack of observation. Many a handsome dwelling has the hall and kitchen offices on the south and rooms in constant use on the north side of the house. Animals know enough to seek the sunny side of their shelters. Instinct teaches them, while women, who spend almost all their lives indoors, dwell in sunless, cheerless rooms. As if that were not enough, they must shut out whatever light there is by a superfluity of drapery. Sash curtains, except where needed for the sake of privacy, are worse than useless. Even the wife of the day laborer must spend a portion of the hard-earned money that should go for necessities in tawdry, coarse Nottingham lace that is offensive to the beauty-loving eye. Do not shades suffice to keep out the glare of the sun from rooms in constant use? We all know the effect of the lack of sunshine on growing plants, but we ignore its influence upon ourselves.—From 'Good House-keeping.'

### Household Hints.

(To the Editor of the 'Northern Messenger'.)

For kitchen walls and ceilings, bed rooms opening off the kitchen or any place where a thorough annual cleaning is necessary there is nothing like good fresh white lime. The fault many have to it is that it rubs off. In your issue of May 10 the article on 'Housecleaning Hints' says to make a paste and pour in the lime. I have found a much better way is to add salt instead, as the paste makes the lime turn yellow. Slack the lime the day before, take as much as will make half a pail by adding water until about as thick as cream, stir well to make it smooth and creamy, then add a cupful of salt. Sweep walls and ceilings well to free them of dust, patch any broken places in the plaster by pasting on strong factory cotton or old paper flour bags. Sprinkle the floor with sawdust and you are ready to commence. Apply the lime with a brush for the purpose. A great improvement can be made by going over it a second time, adding blueing water to the whitewash—it can even be made a blue tint by adding enough. This will not rub off and can be papered over, the paper sticking well.

MARION BROWNLEE.

Miss Florence Nightingale maintained that sheets and pillows should be shaken out of doors, and the underside of the mattress turned up to the air. It is a well known scientific fact that a large quantity of dead matter, exudations from the pores of the skin during sleep, remain in the night clothing and the bedding. If shaken around in the room by making up the bed and not opening the windows, these remain in the

room to pollute the air and adhere to the walls, curtains, furniture, etc. Any one whose senses are acute, can most always notice a dead smell when this careless and insanitary method has been employed. On the other hand, when there is the fresh, sweet smell of the outside air on the bed clothing and night garments, one knows that his housekeeper has clean air in her house, as well as the cleanliness that appeals only to the eye.—'Christian Work.'

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