

HOUSEHOLD.

'She.'

(By the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher.)

She is away—absent. When a man says 'she,' he is understood. To every 'he' there is one 'she,' or should be. And 'she' is away, leaving us to thought and good resolutions. Like Hawthorne, we have been washing dishes. Says he:

'The washings of dishes does seem to me the most absurd and unsatisfactory business that I ever undertook. If, when once washed, they would remain clean forever and ever (which they ought in all reason to do, considering how much trouble it is), there would be less occasion to grumble, but no sooner is it done than it requires to be done again. On the whole, I have come to the resolution not to use more than one dish at each meal.'

The quiet fidelity with which 'she' will dish-wash her life away for 'him' is a marvel of endurance and grace. Just here is the servitude of woman heaviest—no sooner is her work done than it requires to be done again. Man works up jobs, ends them, and takes his pay. The pay can be translated into something else desirable. A man works all day and draws pay for his day's work. This pay allures him, as oats a horse homeward bound. Thus men work by terms and jobs—and, although the work is endless as to quantity, yet, when cut up thus into terms and jobs, we men go heartily on our journey and count the milestones.

Not so with our mates. 'She' mends our socks, and we put our irrepressible toe upon the darned spot, and she darns it again. 'She' washes for the family, and the family makes haste to send back the same garments to be washed again. 'She' puts the room in order, and we get it ready to be 'rid up' again. The same socks, the same washing, the same room every time. She has no successive jobs, no terms, no pay-day, no tally-stick of life. She washes the same dish three hundred and sixty-five—yes, three times three hundred and sixty-five times every year. No wonder she breaks it and is glad of it! What a relief to say: 'I've done that dish.'

Not only have we, like Hawthorne, washed dishes, but also we cooked and served and helped eat a meal (with bated appetite because of cooking), and now we are astonished at the number of thoughts, and acts, and processes involved in a very plain supper. Only two of us, jolly cronies, caring nothing for style, and needing only a very plain supper. And we had it, and with it came wisdom.

Gentlemen, all! We go into a room and see a table ready set. It seems to us one thing—a supper. It is, in fact, from fifty to two hundred separate things, taken down one by one for us to use, and for 'her' to wash and put back whence they came. There is a plate of biscuit. To that plate of simplicity we, with our hands and feet, brought together a new, quick fire for baking, viz.: kindling wood, raking out stove, and hod of coal. Flour from the bin, shortening from the gravy-dip down cellar, salt from one box, sugar from another, soda from the jar, acid (tartaric) from a bottle, a spoon, a pitcher of water, a dripping pan, and a tin pan for mixing up these ingredients, and, after all, happening to forget the things for ten minutes, we burned the biscuit half way through in a way which we men reckon unpardonable in a cook. Meanwhile that one plate of biscuit added to the eternal dish-wash two spoons, two pans, one plate, and a little cup. Just a little piece of steak contributed eight pieces to the dish-wash. A few strawberries sent in six pieces to be got ready to soil again. Four eggs impressed themselves on six separate articles.

Gentlemen, we began at ten minutes to six, and at a quarter to eight we found ourselves triumphant—everything cleared away except the dishcloth. You see, we washed up the breadpan, the dishpan and the sink, scalding them all (and our fingers, too), and dried them off with the dishcloth. Now, where on earth can we go to wash out that dishrag? Not in the clean pan! Not over

the clean, dry sink! We stood aghast for five minutes, and then wadded up the rag, round like a snowball, and tucked it into the far corner of the sink, and then shut down the cover. Our sink has a cover. But that rag, though hidden, was heavy on our conscience. 'She' never would have done so. We have seen clean dishcloths, but how they wash them passes our skill.

And so, as we said, 'she' is away, leaving us to thought and good resolutions. We shall be a wiser and a better man for at least two days after her return. And, whenever we stop to think, shall rank a house-keeper and home maker as a worker second to none on the scale of achievement and deserving. Her services are like the air, the rain and the sunshine, indispensable, yet too often enjoyed without thanksgiving.—Reprinted in 'Boston Transcript.'

Keep Up With Them.

Now, no home can be really sweet unless the husband has his fair share of his wife's attention. Much better spend an hour in amusing yourself by mastering the details in John's daily paper, than in putting so many tucks in little Jane's frock. John will less often spend the evening out if Jenny can talk intelligently of the thing which rightly or wrongly interests him. John would far less often take other people out for amusement if Jenny were sometimes ready to trust her children to God and go along with him. No, the above sentence is no mistake in printing! We mothers seem to think we are so indispensable to the little ones that we will never leave them, and some day, perhaps, dear mothers, God will show that he is perfectly able to look after the babies without our help. He may take you away from them altogether if you do not take occasion to re-create yourselves sometimes. It is the worst kind of economy to overwork. Keep in touch with your musical boy by going to an occasional concert or penny reading with him and his father. Cultivate your God-given sense of beauty by sparing a shilling for a ticket at a picture gallery or museum. Buy seeds and teach the little ones how wonderfully the cyclamen curls up its straight stem into a corkscrew, before pushing its seed-vessel into the soft mould. Or how the spear-points of cress spring up on its globular seed reaching liquid. Keep up a little course of good reading, and give time to show how there are—

'Books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones,
And good in everything.'

In fact, make time to take a positive and not merely a negative attitude towards everything that interests husband and children.—'Home Words.'

Keep Sweet.

Suppose a world of troubles do
Annoy you day by day;
Suppose that friends considered true
Your trust in them betray;
And rocks may bruise and thorns may tear
Your worn and weary feet,
And every day you meet a snare—
Keep sweet.

Suppose you have not each desire
That forms within your mind;
And earth denies you half your hire,
And heaven seems quite unkind;
And you have not the best to wear,
Nor yet the best to eat;
You seem to have the meanest fare—
Keep sweet.

A sour heart will make things worse
And harder still to bear,
A merry heart destroys the curse
And makes the heavens fair.
So I advise, whatever your case—
Whatever you may meet,
Dwell on the good—forget the base—
Keep sweet.

—'British Weekly.'

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