

THE HOUSEHOLD.

KITCHEN MARTYRS.

BY MATTHEW F. BELL.

Some one once asked a little girl whether her mother's hair was gray. "I don't know was the innocent reply; "I can't see to the top of her head, and she don't ever sit down."

Solomon says of the good housekeeper, "She looketh well to the ways of her household." The woman who is always overrun with work, never seeing a chance to rest for a single minute, who is always bustling about, anxious, burdened, her whole aim being, to all outward appearance, to "get her work done," busy, busy, busy, catching the broom to whisk away an infinitesimal spot of dirt here, flourishing the dustbrush to tear down an imaginary cobweb over yonder, ripping open all the feather-beds in the house to see whether some stray moth has not stolen a march on her and sought rest within the downy contents, scalding up all the preserves in the cellar once a week for fear they might begin to work when she didn't know it, running upstairs and down, out to the barn and into the attic, tiring herself and every one else in the house,—we have all seen just such women, and probably not one of us believes such a one to be the woman to whom Solomon in his wisdom referred as looking "well to the ways of her household." There are better and nobler methods of doing this than cooking, washing, cleaning and scrubbing. A woman's work is not finished, her duty not entirely performed for her family, when she has made and mended their clothes, cooked their food and mopped the kitchen floor. If she looks well to the ways of her household, she will see to it that her husband has her companionship, as well as a starched shirt-front; that her children have food for their minds, as well as good dinners; that her own face wears the smile of love and contentment instead of the vexed frown and wrinkles of daily worry over the absorbing questions, "What shall we eat, drink and wear?"

No woman who is a drudge in her kitchen can do justice to her family. The husband of such a wife eats his meals as quickly as possible, and goes where he can find somebody to talk to him and with whom he can talk upon something besides bread and potatoes and wood and water.

The children of such a mother have learned not to trouble her with their little trials and perplexities, when all they get for answer is, "Oh, go along! don't bother me; I'm too busy to think anything about it." And so they take judgment into their own hands and do as they like, undisturbed, unless by some unlucky misdemeanor they transgress the rigid rules of order, or do something to irritate the mother's high-strung nerves. With her, out of sight is out of mind. So, if Johnnie wants to run down to the corner grocery and sit and hear the men talk and swear, and inhale their vile tobacco smoke, and learn to puff cigarettes, and perhaps be taken into the saloon next door and "treated" for doing an errand for the grocer, his mother is none the wiser. She only knows that he comes home cross, and she sends him to bed with harsh words; and if she sniffs the smell of cigar smoke or his tainted breath, she never imagines that her boy would drink or hold a cigarette between his lips, and she hurries him off, while she goes out to set her bread or attend to the coffee for breakfast.

And Annie,—she would like to ask her mother whether she might go to the play just once; the other girls go, and like it. But in a fifteen years' acquaintance with her mother she has learned that a request to indulge in any recreation generally meets with sharp words and a final refusal. So on Saturday afternoon she steals away with some of her questionable associates, and goes to the matinee, and sees things that she should not see, and hears things that she should not hear, and that would startle her mother if she knew. But the mother does not know, and busy, heart and hands and brain, with her never-ceasing work, work, work, she only wonders why that lazy girl stays so long when she sent her on an errand to the store. Then she loses all thought of her in finishing up the week's ironing for Sunday. Does she look "well to the ways of her household?"

On through life she goes, her daily routine—work, fret, worry—making unlovely her own life and the lives of those for whose souls she will be held accountable, as well as for their bodies. Is it any wonder that in a few years John leaves forever behind him the house where he has taken his daily meals and daily scoldings, and leaves the fretful, over-busy mother, who never had time to give her boy the earnest caution, the wise counsel that might have built up his character into uprightness,—leaves them behind, and steps out, feeling free! If his after years should bring him dishonor and shame, whose, think you, will be the blame? Is it any wonder that Annie weds the first shallow-brained fop who praises her bright eyes and pretty face? She, who has never known real appreciation in her home, accepts this as genuine, poor child! and, without the sanction or knowledge of those who should have been her dearest friends, she goes forth into new and untried scenes, with no loving counsel from mother, no benedictions from father. The father upbraids the mother for driving the children from home, and the poor, deluded mother, worn out now in body and mind, mourns over her cruel fate and the hard-heartedness of her family, for whom she had always slaved and toiled night and day, and this is all the thanks she gets for it. Poor mother! poor children! poor father and husband! All to be pitied.

But the work has to be done, you say. Very true; and if it falls to the lot of the wife and mother to do it, she of course, cannot sit down and fold her hands. But there is reason in all things,—unless it be in just such women as I have been picturing,—and I am speaking of those who allow work in the kitchen and for the temporal wants of the family to absorb all their life and thoughts and being, who could not rest nights if the chairs were not set back on just such a stripe in the carpet, or if one drop of water had been spilled on the kitchen floor and had not been wiped up, or if there was a fly in the pantry, or if anybody had hung the dustpan on the right-hand nail instead of the left-hand one, the two being about three inches apart.

"Ma is so painfully particular," said a young girl to me one day. "Why, you'll laugh, I know, but I've known her to get up out of bed at night, after pa had put out the light, just to fold a newspaper he had left on the table and place it in the paper-holder just over the table."

Let us, then, while we strive to have orderly homes, well-cooked food and neatly served repasts, not neglect the higher good of those in our household, knowing that if we do our best in all directions, we shall have earned an approving conscience and the Master's divine benediction, "She hath done what she could."

WHAT THEY EARN.

The *Farm and Fireside* urges the importance of daughters at home receiving a regular money allowance in consideration of the work they do. The writer says:

I know scores of girls who say that really they like housework better than any other kind, "but there is no money in it," so they grow uneasy, they want the money (not money, of course, but the freedom it gives). They go from home to be teachers or clerks, and there is waste of precious material on all sides. The solution of this trouble is proper appreciation of the daughter at home. According to our ideas, that home is the happiest which can do without the "hired girl," but daughters who fill this place, and more than fill it, complain that they do so without the wages. Just here is the trouble. If a daughter gets two dollars a week (a moderate estimate of what would have to be paid to a servant), that is \$104 per year. Her board, at \$5 a week, is \$260 per year. Her leisure, when she can do much of her own sewing, is worth enough to raise her earnings to \$400. The home happiness, the calm rest-feeling, the healthful habits of such a life are worth what cannot be counted in dollars, and we believe such a just financial arrangement would be appreciated by any sensible girl and give contentment to many of even superior ability. It is, after all, that small sum, \$104 in cash, which makes the plan satisfactory. A girl can do a great deal with that, and most of them prefer to do their own spending or saving. To have one's personal expenses to manage gives

amusement and experience. The father should not think his daughter well treated because he boards her and gives her occasionally a new dress, but, on the other hand, a girl should not lose sight of the value of her home privileges.

THE MENDING BASKET.

Yes, I like a basket the best; and baskets are wonderfully cheap, too. For ten cents I found a real beauty at one of the prominent Japanese stores, and it was large enough to hold every article likely to need mending from my weekly wash. My family is small, though. Two or three such baskets would do for all sorts and sizes—a big family mending. A large basket for holding the garments to be mended, a small one for pieces and patches, and one or two quite small ones for holding needles, scissors, threads and all the etcetera; these seem essentials for a mending outfit, and they can easily be gathered together on the morning they are needed.

For darning, I have found that for all the finer grades of hosiery there come cottons, silks and wools in every conceivable shade of color and of good quality, while needles, from coarse to fine, are of good quality and cheap in price. A small orange gourd makes a good darning egg.

For mending table linen, a few threads of the linen ravelings are really the best thing. If the mesh is closely woven, no patch is required. If the linen is very thin, a strip of thin muslin can be sewn on the under side with very fine cotton, and then the darn neatly sewn through to this.

Very fine short needles come for mending gloves especially. A stitch which has run down on a silk glove can be caught up with a very fine steel crochet-needle, so also can let-down stitches in silk stockings.

By noticing small rips and holes and mending them, considerable work is saved; for it takes time to mend a large rent.

Buttons are apt to pull out, leaving a hole. By putting a bit of tape, or material like the garment, under and another over the hole and securely sewing them on, the button can be put on in its original place and be quite as firm, if not a little stronger, than before. In sewing on a button the twist can be passed around the shank or below the eyes three or four times, thus giving a kind of purchase by which the button-hole is held in place. If extra buttons are either strung on a string or kept in small boxes by themselves, they are found more easily than if left loose in a bag or box with many kinds.

Strings are apt to wear off near where they are sewed on. The bit left should be carefully ripped off and a new sewing taken up, or else the new strings put on.

One is often tempted to just run up a slit, but it is usually better to put a bit of cloth under the hole and neatly darn down upon it. It will not pull out in that place again at any rate.

Stockings can be cut down for children. A pattern of the right size for the child's foot should be selected and the sole of old stockinet or flannel cut on the bias, neatly fitted in, and sewn with ball-stitch.

Patches should be cut and fitted to match the hole in the garment, both in figure and in the way in which the thread of the cloth lies; for patches, if neatly put in, if not exactly ornamental, have the effect of giving a serviceable, comfortable air to an old garment, which is highly satisfactory. The whole difference between thrift and unthrift can be shown by the opposite ways of patching adopted by different housekeepers. The mending basket ought not to be the badge of poverty, but rather one of the signs of thrifty economy. It cannot be banished from our home. Let us pay heed to it, then, that it is an orderly affair, and not a mass of tangled patch, piece, thread, cotton, silk and needles, with half the needful implements missing on the occasions when they are most needed. Let the scissors be very sharp and kept in a neat case of chamois skin. Have a good thimble and an ample supply of needles, pins and of the various little contrivances, which are so small in themselves, and yet so nice to work with when old garments are to be renovated, so as to look "amaist as weel's the new."—*Christian at Work.*

**RICE MUFFINS.**—Boil soft and dry half a cup of rice, and stir into it three teaspoonfuls of sugar, butter size of an egg, a little salt, one pint of milk, one cup of yeast, two quarts of flour. Let the mixture rise all night, and bake in muffin rings.

SELECTED RECIPES.

**PANNED OYSTERS.**—Strain the oysters; then wet and wring out a bit of cheesecloth, and through this strain the liquor into the pan. Scald the liquor, skimming as any scum rises. Add pepper, butter and salt if needed. Then put the oysters in and cook till the edges curl. Serve in a hot, covered dish.

**CURRIED.**—Blanch two dozen oysters of a good size; fry a small minced onion in a teaspoonful of butter; stir in one teaspoonful of curry powder, add the oyster liquor and oysters, and as soon as all come to a boil thicken with a teaspoonful of flour wet with cream. Serve with rice in a separate dish.

**CASSEROLE OF FISH.**—Pick a cold boiled fish into bits, and then work it up fine with the yolks of five hard boiled eggs and six mashed potatoes, a large lump of butter, pepper, salt, and a little finely chopped parsley. Butter a mould, fill with the mixture, and bake till brown. Serve with butter.

**EGGS AU FOUR.**—Boil one dozen eggs hard. Cut each in half lengthwise, and remove the yolks. Crumb the yolks into a smooth paste with a bit of butter, pepper, salt, and chopped parsley. Replace the prepared yolks in the whites, pour over them a good drawn butter, and set them in the oven just to brown on the top.

**FRIZZLED BEEF.**—To make this a nice dish get fine-flavored beef, and have it cut very thin. Then with the fingers pull every slice into bits of an inch or less. Put the beef into a fryingpan, cover it with cold water, and place on the fire just long enough to heat the water. Pour the water off and replace it with as much sweet milk, a bit of butter as large as a small egg, and sufficient sifted flour to make a cream dressing.

**HAM AND EGGS.**—The nicest way to cook ham for breakfast is to cut off very thin bits about a finger long, always with an edge of fat. Lay these pieces in a fryingpan, and cover them with cold water. Set the pan on the stove till the water heats; then pour the water off and dry the pan, and putting the ham back, frizzle it briskly till a delicate brown. Lay a poached egg and a slice of ham side by side on a plate. Ham should be eaten as soon as served, as it toughens when cool.

**RICE WAFFLES.**—To a pint of soft boiled rice add a teaspoonful of salt and a pint of flour, in which sift two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Beat the yolks and whites of three eggs separately. Add to the yolks a cup of sweet milk. Pour into the rice and flour with a tablespoonful of melted butter, or rather a tablespoonful before it is melted. Lastly, add the stiffly beaten whites. Mix thoroughly and bake as you do the plain waffles. Very nice and delicate.

PUZZLES—No. 1.

CROSSWORD.

My first is in nap, but not in wake,  
My second is in fear, and also in quake,  
My third is in pudding, but not in cake,  
My fourth is in hoc, but not in rako,  
My fifth is in light, but not in dark,  
My sixth is in grove, but not in park,  
My seventh is in John, but not in Mark,  
My eighth is in Jane, but not in Paul,  
My whole is a General known to all.

METAGRAM.

I am brave; change my head, and I denote low temperature; again, and I am an enclosure; again, and I am what all men want; again, and I am to keep; again, and I am a kind of earth; again, and I am disposed of; again, and I am narrated; again, and I am a poetic name for a field; behold me, and I am no longer young.

HISTORICAL ACROSTIC.

A famous battle of the eleventh century,  
A Mohammedan dynasty,  
A former kingdom in Italy,  
A battle of the Hundred Years' War,  
A Spanish Queen,  
An order of knights,  
An inhabitant of a country discovered in the fifteenth century,  
A religious sect of the fifteenth century,  
A building erected to commemorate the battle of St. Quentin,  
A small kingdom in southeastern Europe,  
The "land of cakes,"  
The primals spell the name of a famous order of knights.

SQUARE WORD.

1. A destructive bird. 2. Matured fruit. 3. Not shut. 4. Part of the verb to go.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.—NUMBER 26.

ANAGRAM.—Peter Piper.

OCTAGON PUZZLE.

Across.

T A N  
A M P L E  
P A R A P E T  
O X Y T O N E  
T A P I O O A  
E S T O P  
N E T

Downward.—Apatite.

**DIAMOND.**—1. P. 2. For. 3. Corea. 4. Forceps. 5. Porcelain. 6. Re-elect. 7. Apaco. 8. Sit. 9. N. **HIDDEN MAMMALS.**—1. Apo. 2. Hog. 3. Rat. 4. Yak. 5. Elephant. 6. Deer. 7. Seal. 8. Shrew. 9. Hare. 10. Dog. 11. Zebu. 12. Bear. 13. Cow. 14. Elk. 15. Walrus. 16. Beaver. 17. Ewe. 18. Goat. 19. Mandril. 20. Coon. 21. Gnu. 22. Mink. 23. Buffalo. 24. Lion. 25. Ram. 26. Cat. 27. Mouse. 28. Moose. 29. Deer. 30. Leopard. 31. Horse. 32. Whale. 33. Ox. 34. Bat. 35. Zebra. 36. Camel. 37. Daman. 38. Sloth. 39. Wensel. 40. Sable. 41. Saki. 42. Civet. 43. Lemur. 44. Otter. 45. Bison. 46. Badger.

**TWINS.**—Tar-Tar. Tartar.

SQUARE WORD.—

P A T H  
A G U E  
T U B E  
H E R L

PUZZLERS CHAT.

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