

THE HOUSEHOLD.

TWO HOMES.

Nettie is my dearest friend, and has the cosiest home and the nicest husband and children in W. She is a cheery little matron who makes the best of everything, hard times included. Jack, when she married him, was a steady young man, cashier in the bank, with a salary of one thousand dollars per year. They bought a house and furnished it, going into debt several hundred dollars to accomplish the same, and then commenced the struggle.

Five babies were added to their household, which necessitated considerable extra expense that Jack would have been unable to meet if the utmost care had not been exercised in domestic matters. Fifteen years have passed since she came here a bride, and everything has prospered with them. Jack is now president of the bank where he was formerly cashier. Nettie keeps a good girl to assist her, and four months of the year a seamstress besides. The children are prettily clothed, "but don't imagine for one instant," said my friend, "that I am allowing them to grow up in ignorance of the worth of money. The two older ones are required to keep an account of their personal expenses, which prevents their using money unthinkingly. Harry is a great reader, and last fall when he wanted Macaulay's histories and a set of Dickens' works, I advised him to earn the money for them, knowing that he would value them more for having obtained them in that way. He sawed and piled wood for several of our neighbors last winter, and, this spring, raked and mowed their yards, and now he has his books; and has others in view for which he is saving every cent. He is a fine student, almost ready to enter college, and we thought all the manual labor he could be induced to perform would be of benefit to him.

Annette is twelve, and her one talent is music; yet this spring, when overhearing her papa and me talk about hard times, she offered to give up her lessons for a while, which we would not listen to, of course. Still, I thought a little self-sacrifice would do her good; so I told her if she and Harry would tend the baby what time they had, and help Bertha a little in the kitchen, I would do the summer sewing, and we would divide the money. We have done so, and Annette has paid for her lessons the last quarter.

"We have also used simpler food, and worn plainer clothes than for some years back. To be sure, there is no need of retrenching present expenses, but there are five little ones to be educated, and put in the way of caring for themselves, and every year our necessary expenses will increase."

Just then the clock struck six, and in came two of the children, aged respectively six and eight years.

"Excuse me," said Nettie, "this is my children's hour."

One of the Dotty Dimple books was produced by Miss Janie, and listened to eagerly for half an hour, then the book was laid aside, and, with one on each knee, mamma listened patiently to the experiences and grievances of the day, and at seven they were put to bed. Then came the elder children.

"I suppose you think we are childish, don't you, Auntie?" said Harry, "but we always have to have our hour with mamma as well as the others."

Annette played the new piece she had been learning, very well indeed; Harry brought his algebra and mamma explained a knotty problem; and then, with two stools in front and two heads in Nettie's lap, came the mother-talk which was preparing the dark-eyed boy and girl to make other homes in the years to come, after the pattern of this one.

As I looked at the pretty group, the Bible verse came into my mind "Her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband also and he praiseth her."

While in W—I visited another old friend and schoolmate who was married about the same time as Nettie. Her husband is in a store. They have a very pleasant home and two children about the same age as Harry and Annette Horn, but I hadn't been in the house two hours, before I perceived a difference. The mother was fretful and fault-finding, the children

impudent. Mr. Carroll was gloomy and reserved, and Susie told me in confidence that he was on the verge of failure. "I'm sure I don't see how I can help it, though he seems to blame me. I have economized dreadfully the past year, have stopped Jessie's music lessons, and given up going out of town this summer."

I could not repress a sigh. The night before I had seen her give Arthur a dollar because he teased for it, never even inquiring what he intended to do with it. They employed a girl and a seamstress, and the table groaned beneath its weight of delicacies, and yet she thought she was economical!

There was no children's hour here. They were told to do as they had a mind to, only not bother her. They were children with intellects far above the average, fully equal, naturally, to Harry and Annette, but so perverted had been their training that there was no comparison between them. Their mother had no thought of their future beyond hoping that Jessie might marry a rich man, which remark was made in the child's hearing. I asked her if Arthur were not going through college and she said it was too expensive, he could get education enough where he was.

When Susie was married, her husband had a house for her and some money in the bank. Now his house is encumbered with a heavy mortgage, and he is behind in every way. He is a man of good habits, and a good business manager, but the waste and outlay at home are too much for him.

I went home a sadder and wiser woman. I thought, how are we bringing up our sons and daughters, to be the light of our homes, intelligent, God-fearing, loving, and dutiful, or just the opposite?

Don't be afraid to spend time on your children! Not on their bodily needs, every mother does that, but on their mental and moral nature, that they may be successful in life in the best sense of the word; that when twenty, thirty or forty years have passed, and they are congratulated on their achievements, they may say, "Don't praise me! praise mother."—Margaret Lyndith, in the Housekeeper.

MRS. PENNEY'S DILEMMA.

When Mrs. Penney last April resolved to take boarders from the city during the summer, she was greatly troubled about the parlor mantel-shelf in the old farmhouse. "They are very fashionable folks," she said; "what will they think of that great high wooden thing? If I could only afford a marble mantelpiece, or at least a slate one."

"Cover it with a woollen lambrequin," suggested a neighbor.

Mrs. Penney saved her milk and butter money, stunted the table, made over her old gowns, and at last was able to buy some crimson rep, which was draped and looped over the high carved shelf.

"Dear me!" cried a friend who had just come from the city, "Rep has gone out ages ago! Cretonne is all the rage now." Mrs. Penney was energetic and resolved to be "in the style."

Another month of saving and she was able to tear off the woollen drapery and loop over the mantel-self a gray flowered cretonne.

With the first of June arrived two of her boarders from a neighboring town. She consulted them as to the effect of her decorations. The elder woman surveyed them through her eye-glass.

"Very pretty, indeed. But mantel-shelves are made quite low, now. In the new houses you never see high things like that. It certainly looks very queer."

Mrs. Penney sent for the nearest carpenter. At a somewhat large cost the old woodwork was torn out and a low painted shelf replaced it.

In July her city guests came. The day after they arrived one of the men, an artist, came to her.

"I have found some pieces of curious carving in the wood-pile," he said. "Is it possible that you had one of those rare old colonial mantel shelves and have destroyed it?"

"I did not know," stammered Mrs. Penney.

"Why, the best houses are now built in imitation of the colonial mansions, and

genuine carvings are priceless," he said, indignantly.

Then Mrs. Penney looked with misery at her hideous painted shelf, and wished bitterly that she had never undertaken to follow the fashion.—Rebecca Harding Davis, in the Household.

TWO WAYS.

"Come Sophy, pick up your playthings now," said mamma. The command was given decisively, but Sophy, a pretty three-year old, with firmness written on every delicate feature, demurred. The mother's face showed the same characteristic and a battle was soon in progress, physical strength of course gaining the victory.

Not only was Sophy's evening meal of graham mush and milk, which immediately followed, eaten between sobs, but even after sleep had settled over her face the cheeks were tear-stained and red, and a tiny frown marred the white forehead. Unfortunately this programme, with slight variations, was carried out daily.

But one afternoon it was necessary for Sophy's mamma to leave home for a few hours, and a friend volunteered to stay with the child until the mother's return. "I will try to be at home at five," the latter said, as she was buttoning up her gloves, "but if I fail, that is Sophy's supper hour. Jane will have supper ready. As soon as she has eaten, as she is usually very tired, I put her to bed. I do not think she will give you any trouble. Oh, I nearly forgot—do not try to have her pick up her playthings. I always make her do it before she had her supper, but she dislikes the work so much that we have a battle scene every day. So, if I don't get home in time just let the things lie and I'll put them away after she is asleep."

The afternoon passed pleasantly to Sophy and her friend, for the latter possessed that sixth sense, tact, which so soon finds the way to a child's heart. When it was within a few minutes of five o'clock, the mother had not returned. Sophy showed no signs of weariness, but the friend said: "Come now, it's time for Sophy's supper." The child climbed into her friend's lap and turned her scowling eyes on the toy-strewn floor. "I'm going to make an experiment," was the lady's silent resolve. So she began to chant softly and musically, thus:

"I wonder where Sophy's woolly lamb is? Oh, I see it lying on the floor; hear it cry 'baa-ba-a-ba-a, I want to go to bed in my basket in the corner.'"

This appeal to Sophy's very lively imagination brought her to the floor with a laugh. With many coaxing words and caressing pats the lamb was at once deposited in its proper place. Then the lady began again: "I wonder where Sophy's blocks are? Oh, I know they all went off this morning to play, and now it's almost night and they're so tired, and they can't find their way home to the basket in the corner." This song was also effectual, and Sophy was soon showing the blocks "the way home." So the play went on merrily till every toy was in its place. Then the supper was eaten amid smiles instead of sobs and, when mamma returned a few moments after, it was a very gay little daughter who met her in the hall.

"Oh," she thought, anxiously, "I am almost sorry to find her awake; now I shall have another battle over those playthings, and I am so tired I do not feel equal to it." Great was her surprise when she entered the sitting-room. "How did you manage?" she exclaimed, turning to her friend. The explanation, however, was deferred until Sophy had gone happily to sleep with a smile on her lips. Fortunately, the mother's common sense was quite as large as her firmness, and thereafter the daily "picking up" time became a delightful season of play to Sophy and an undreaded duty to her mamma.—Babyhood.

THE MORAL VALUE OF NEATNESS.

One of the serious mistakes made by mothers in training their children is in supposing that careful habits can be cultivated in careless surroundings. A ragged or worn carpet, so little valued by the mother that grease or ink spots can be left on it without causing comment, may become a moral calamity. Tying the child up in a bib, and giving it the liberty to spill its food when eating, is responsible for bad table

habits in the men and women whom we meet. A child who is made to eat its food carefully, in a room where the furnishings are respected, where a penalty will follow carelessness, naturally acquires careful, refined manners. Many a mother spends more time repairing damages—the results of careless habits, due largely to the furnishings in the dining-room—than she would need to spend in setting a table carefully and keeping the room in order, so that its order and neatness commanded the respect of the children. The ounce of prevention is worth several pounds of cure in the training of children, and it is a pity that the ounce of prevention is not administered in the infinitesimal doses necessary in early childhood, rather than in the radical doses necessary to overcome neglect in matters that are never minor—for manners and habits mark the man. A man may be a moral man and eat with his knife; but he would be a more valuable man in the community if he recognized the uses for which the knife was designed and applied it only to those uses.—The Christian Union.

RECIPES.

MEAT FRITTERS.—Cut cold meat into dice and season. Make a batter of eggs, milk and flour, dip up a spoonful of batter and put in a few pieces of meat, cover and drop in boiling fat. Put in as many as will cook at a time. Skim out in a colander to drain them, remove to a hot platter for the table.

AMERICAN POTATO SALAD.—Cut cold potatoes in small slices. Put into a dish two raw eggs, seven tablespoonfuls of vinegar, one tablespoonful of butter and half a teaspoonful of mustard. Put the dish into boiling water and stir until the dressing is as thick as good cream. Add salt and pepper, and pour over the potatoes.—Record.

MEAT HASH.—Corn beef is best, but other meats can be used. Allow nearly twice as much cold chopped potato as meat, put two or three spoonfuls of butter in spider and half as much water. When hot, put hash in and cover five minutes, set it on top of the stove where it will brown on the bottom, not burn; after a while turn it over so as to brown the rest. Some prefer to use half a cup of sweet cream, instead of browning it.

ESCALLOPED MEAT.—Beef, veal or mutton left over cold can be used for scallops. Chop, but not too fine, season with salt. Allow half as much bread crumbs as meat and a bowl of gravy. Butter an earthen baking dish, put in a layer of meat, then pour over a little gravy, about two spoonfuls, and on top a layer of crumbs. Alternate the layers until the dish is full, putting a thicker layer of crumbs on top. Bake twenty or twenty-five minutes.

PUZZLES NO. 25.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

They left their little ones at home,
And whither went they did not know,
But for the church of God did roam,
And lost their lives by doing so.

They wandered in a perfect road,
With crowds of wicked full in view;
They lived to man and died to God,
But of religion nothing knew.

ENIGMA.

Ye common plodders of the race,
Behold me in such lofty place!
Unwearied though your efforts be
You all may rise, but not like me.
Yet though I stand at such a height,
I am but fragile, weak and slight.
Prisoned by bonds I cannot break,
And that is well for my own sake;
For if I once should burst my thrall
Sudden and sure would be my fall.

DECAPITATION.

So total ways are there, to show
Kindness of heart, while here below,
There's no excuse for last
Who say they fain would pleasure give,
But still in selfish indolence live,
And wait till chance is past.

"There's no time like the present time,"
Is truth, as well as pleasing rhyme;
"The future is not ours."
Seek now an opportunity,
And total chances will you see,
To "improve the shining hours."

PUZZLE.

I'm very sure this little word
That means to join, you've often heard,
Five letters form it, and 'tis strange
That two transposed make such a change;
It joins no more and you will find
That now it tells you to unbind.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES No. 24.

PECULIAR ACROSTIC.—Christmas, Mistletoe.
Cross-words: 1. beCalMed. 2. beHavIng. 3. caR.
esSed. 4. prImaTus. 5. asSailed. 6. caTterErs.
7. coMpuTer. 8. drAgOns. 9. AsSayErs.

WORD TRIANGLE.—

C H I R I S T M A S
H U M O R I S T
R E V O L V E
I O D I N E
S P E A R
T O O L
M O E
A S
S

DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Nativity, Yule-tide.

BIOGRAPHICAL ANAGRAM.—Italicized words—Christmas day, marked, birth, worlds, philosophers, Sir Isaac Newton, discovery, law, gravitation.