Longfellow's Home

IDEAL HOMES

OUR GOLDEN MILESTONES

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HELPFULNESS AND PLEASURE
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AND HOME.

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FROM ______________________

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Ideal Homes

OR

Our Golden .... Mile-Stones

✦ ✦ ✦

"Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-stone,
"Is the central point, from which he measures
"Every distance
"Through the gateways of the world around him."

LONGFELLOW.

✦ ✦ ✦

A Volume of Practical Experiences.
Popularly Illustrated.

Embracing all the
Interests of the Household.

BY

MRS. JULIA MCNAIR WRIGHT.

Philadelphia: J. H. MOORE CO.
Chicago: J. H. MOORE & CO.

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THE GOLDEN MILE-STONE.

LEAFLESS are the trees; their purple branches
Spread themselves abroad, like reefs of coral,
Rising silent
In the Red Sea of the winter sunset.

From the hundred chimneys of the village,
Like the Afreet in the Arabian story,
Smoky columns
Tower aloft into the air of amber.

At the window winks the flickering firelight;
Here and there the lamps of evening glimmer,
Social watch-fires
Answering one another through the darkness.

On the hearth the lighted logs are glowing,
And like Ariel in the cloven pine-tree,
For its freedom
Groans and sighs the air imprisoned in them.

By the fireside there are old men seated,
Seeing ruined cities in the ashes,
Asking sadly
Of the Past what it can ne'er restore them.

By the fireside there are youthful dreamers,
Building castles fair, with stately stairways,
Asking blindly
Of the Future what it cannot give them.

By the fireside tragedies are acted
In whose scenes appear two actors only,
Wife and husband,
And above them God, the sole spectator.

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THE GOLDEN MILE-STONE.

By the fireside there are peace and comfort,
Wives and children, with fair, thoughtful faces,
Waiting, watching,
For a well-known footstep in the passage.

Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-stone;
Is the central point, from which he measures
Every distance
Through the gateways of the world around him.

In his farthest wanderings still he sees it;
Hears the talking flame, the answering night-wind,
As he heard them
When he sat with those who were, but are not.

Happy he whom neither wealth nor fashion,
Nor the march of the encroaching city,
Drives an exile
From the hearth of his ancestral homestead.

We may build more splendid habitations,
Fill our rooms with paintings and with sculptures,
But we cannot
Buy with gold the old associations.

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THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

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IDEAL HOMES.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOUNDATION OF A HOME.

OUR AUNT SOPHRONIA lives in one of our inland towns. She is the relative of many of the townspeople—the Oracle of all. Firmly intrenched in her own opinions, and more than usually self-complacent, she is yet ready to give other people their due; her ideas are broad and sound, and she is no doubt a great blessing to our community. An indefatigable diarist, she has for many years recorded the best of what she thinks and learns on her favorite theme—THE HOME. These journals being too voluminous, and too full of private affairs, to present bodily to the public, she has at our earnest solicitation reproduced part of them topically, and with a happy facility in discussing her subject from the beginning.—J. M. N. W.

Aunt Sophronia discusses, *First*—

THE CAPITAL UPON WHICH TO MARRY.

IT will be a long day before I call myself *old*, simply because I don't feel old, and I have been much too busy in my life to have time to grow old; but these three girls, who were babes in my arms when I was woman-grown, are women now, and talking

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of marrying—at least the two elder ones. I suppose they have been going on, while I have stood still! At least so it looks to me, as it does to people riding on fast trains, as if all the world were moving and they themselves stationary! The three girls are my three nieces: Miriam I brought up; Helen was brought up by her grandmother; and Hester came up as she chose, as her mother, my sister, died when the child was ten, and John Rochedale, her father, says, he "thinks every individuality ought to be left to develop on its own line." Of all things! If *I* had married John Rochedale, as once seemed likely, instead of my sister, he and I would have had some very serious differences of opinion, this subject of "developing" being one of the many whereon we don't agree. I am not particularly sorry that it was Ellen instead of me who became Mrs. Rochedale; not that I object to the married state: I do not doubt that the Lord knew what he was about when he set a married pair at housekeeping in Eden; but the single state has also its advantages, as Paul saw. However most people who preach up "Paul on single-blessedness" seem to forget that, in the Bible, our great Guide-Book, the Lord's opinions for matrimony come a long ways before Paul's for celibacy. I don't think that women should feel that, merely because they are not wives, they have no place nor work in the world, no home-life, no effect on coming generations; and I don't think that women, who, for various reasons, have not married, should set themselves up as holier or better off than their married sisters.

I've given my nieces a deal of good advice, and among the rest I've advised them to marry, if the matter came reasonably to hand, without making it an object in life.

I saw well enough what Mark Rogers was coming to our house so often for, and finally he called upon me, telling me he wanted my consent to his marrying Miriam.

I have no objections to Mark. If I had, I should long ago

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"In the Home the mother makes the character of nations."

Napoleon Bonaparte and his mother.—*Pages* 16 *to* 20.

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have stopped his coming. I don't believe in putting off any duty until its performance is useless. I told Mark that they had my consent, provided they were not in too great haste about the marriage.

"Pshaw!" cried the impatient Mark; "never mind the *trousseau:* what I want is Miriam."

I replied: "What you want, Mark, is a good wife, and what Miriam wants is a good husband. The step you two contemplate is important, especially because it is final: if you make mistakes now, you must bear their burden through your joint lives. The preparation of the *trousseau* is the last thing now in my mind: I should be sorry to have Miriam at once so engrossed in dress and fineries, which in two years will be out of date, and in twenty quite forgotten, that she will have no calm time for consideration, and to prepare herself to face and solve problems which shall be of the last importance, not only to herself, but probably to many others."

I had some simple observations to make to my Miriam upon the step which she contemplated taking, and I concluded that my other two nieces might as well have the benefit of them, so I invited them to tea.

Hester declined, and as she is scarcely sixteen, I reflected that I should have plenty of time to advise her about matrimony; however, after tea, just as we had adjourned to the piazza, over came Hester. As usual, her splendid dark hair was carelessly braided, and she had forgotten her necktie, pin and gloves; she swung her hat by the strings, her gingham dress had no fit, and her shoes were too large. John Rochedale has a theory that the physical should be utterly untrammelled in its growth. I don't know how his theory will turn out for Hester's health and figure—at present she looks very slovenly. I have often been vexed at the meanness of her attire. John is dreadfully stingy except in the matter of books and education. He thinks *brain*

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is the only thing worth spending money on. Since my sister died, John, Hester, and a servant girl live alone in that large, handsome, half-shut house. A splendid library and cabinets are the centre of the whole. The servant is careless, John and Hester up to their eyes in books, and at nights I see two solitary lights, which show where the two are separately pursuing their lonely studies. The library is open to Hester, and I think there are plenty of books there that a young girl should not read; but John says, "There's no trash in it," and so Hester reads as she likes. The only sense he has shown is to get her staid old men for tutors.

Well, up came Hester just as we were seated. I must say she walks like a queen. John is a blond man, and Hester is dark, yet not at all like my sister. She seems a revival of some old type long ago lost out of the Rochedales. I said to her:

"I thought you were not coming, Hester."

"Why," says she, "Mrs. —— was going to lecture, and I meant to go and hear her, when of all things my father declares that it is not woman's sphere to lecture—that it is bold and indecent, and that I shall not go."

"Well, isn't he right?" asks Helen.

"Certainly not," returns Hester, with assurance. "If she knows how to lecture, she has as much right as a man. The question is, Can she lecture well? There is no boldness in it if she thinks of her theme and not of herself. *I* shall speak in public when I grow up. I shall be a lawyer like my father, and then I must speak."

"What folly!" says Helen. "Then you'll never marry. Miriam here is to marry Mark Rogers, and I shall marry, too; I'll take Frank Hand."

"How long beforr you will change your mind?" asked Miriam, reprovingly.

"I won't change; I must stop changing. Grandmother says

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I'll go through the woods and pick up a crooked stick at last. Suppose I don't marry? I have not enough to live on; I shall get old, ugly and crabbed, and have nothing to do. Yes, I must marry."

"If you marry on such grounds as those, Helen," I said, "you will find your lot worse than to be single."

"I thought Mr. Fitch was the man," said Hester.

"O, I was engaged to him for a week, and I wished him in the bottom of the Red Sea all the while, so I broke it off. And then there was Mr. Merry: I couldn't quite make up my mind to take him; and Tom Green I got tired of in two months."

"I should think you would be ashamed to treat people so heartlessly," said Miriam.

"I should think you would be ashamed to treat *yourself* so!" flamed Hester. "Do you think your affection and confidence are of so small value as to be conferred and taken back like penny toys? Have you no respect for your own word, or your own dignity? or are you just an animated lay-figure, with reason and honor and emotions left out when you were made?"

"You speak too harshly to your cousin, Hester," I said.

"Well, I *hate a dunce!*" cried she, so like John Rochedale.

Helen retorted with some spirit: "You, Hester, are so different from what *I* think it is nice for a girl to be, that I should be very sorry if you *did* like me."

"O, I like you well enough," said Hester, with her royal indifference, "only I don't approve of you; but we'll get on without quarrelling, as cousins should. And so, Miriam, you are going to marry Mark? Do you consent to that, Aunt Sophronia?"

"Yes," I said; "if Mark and Miriam have capital enough to enter safely into the married state."

"I did not know you were so mercenary," said Helen. And Miriam quite sadly said: "But we have no capital, aunt."

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"I will explain myself, girls," I added. "Let me first call to your minds the Scripture, 'Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it; lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold begin to mock him, saying: This man began to build, and was not able to finish.'

"Now, my children, if it is so important, and so customary for those who build, or enter into any business enterprise, *to count the cost* when failure will not be final—when, if they err, they can retrieve themselves, or they can give up all, and be, at least, the richer for the experience—is it not far more needful to count the cost of such a step as marriage? to consider whether you have wherewith not only to lay the foundation but rear the superstructure of a Home? Remember that the Home is an institution of God himself; it is his ideal of the life of humanity; upon it, as basis and model, he builds up nations. A Home is not an isolated fragment of life: it is an integral part of society. Every home has its influence, for good or evil, upon humanity at large. Its sanctity, its honor, its importance, is the care of our Creator. Tell me, girls, in thinking of marriage, how far have you thought out the problem of your future?"

"Why," says Helen, "I have thought of the éclat of the engagement, and then the buying lots of things and having them made up in the very latest style, and the cards, the cake, the presents, and the bridesmaids. I shall have an elegant veil and a white silk, and be married in church, and have *three* Saratoga trunks, and a wedding trip, and—well, that's as far as I've gone. I suppose after that one boards at a hotel, or has to go to housekeeping, and I'm afraid it would be dreadfully humdrum. But no more so than flirting with one and another year after year, and seeing all the girls married off."

"For my part," said Miriam, "I have not looked at all this

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style and preparation that Helen describes, because I know I cannot afford it. But I have thought I should like a little home all to myself, and I would keep it as nice as I could, and I would try and help my husband on in the world, and we should have things finer only as we could really afford it. And I should want my home to be very happy, so that all who belonged in it felt that it was the best place in all the world. I should want to gather up all the good that I could everywhere, and bring it into my home, as the bee brings all its spoils to its hive."

"And I," said Hester, "want to make myself a scholar, and I shall marry a scholar, and we shall be happy in learning, and in increasing knowledge. And he shall be my helper, and I shall help him, and so together we shall climb to the top of the tree."

Vanity, love, ambition. These were the three Graces, which, incarnated in my nieces, sat on my piazza. I said to them: "Let me talk to you seriously upon the subject of a Home. Two young people marry; they are united until death do them part; their union is the beginning of the household; that household, in its first members, may last fifty or even seventy years; and whenever it is broken by the death of one or both of them, it will most likely live on in other lives and other households, which in it have found their origin. The household, then, starts in wedded man and woman: the man is a part of society; he has his business in the world; he goes among his fellows carrying the atmosphere of his home with him; his ideas of honor, of unselfishness, his objects, his ambitions, his energies, his geniality, his sympathy, his physical vigor, are largely derived from his home; his acts are stamped with his feelings; whether he is goaded to grasp all and trample on all by a mad thirst for gain, or a wild effort to cover his expenses by his receipts—whether he is happy or sorry, hopeful or discouraged, interested in good

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or evil things, depends largely on his home life. Thus the various homes among men appear as active but invisible spirits in all the departments of business life—with the preacher in the pulpit, the doctor by his patient, the lawyer in the court, the broker, the trader, the mechanic, the laborer, making or marring insensibly but effectively in all that is undertaken in the world. The wife is also a part of society: she has her friends, her social, church and philanthropic duties, sometimes even some business of her own. Into these she brings her spirit as it is fashioned in her home; if order, graciousness, good judgment, probity, reign there, she goes forth a spirit of graciousness, or abides at home a shining light to all who come there, teaching either by precept or by silent example. She makes her home a fountain of bitterness, or a well-spring of strength, bracing her husband's good impulses, or developing his meaner instincts. She makes her home a model of economy, beauty and propriety, or it is a false light of extravagance, spurring others to waste, or it is a head-quarters of misrule.

"Children are born in this home: they shall be in all their lives what this home makes them; they shall train up their future children to be ennobled or warped, as here they learned; they shall carry their energies and example into the world for better or worse, as here was taught them. *The Home never dies;* guests and servants come and go, and carry out its influences; like the souls in whom it began, like God its founder, it abides without end. In this home children receive also their instruction: their worldly occupations are chosen, and fortunes are laid up for them: their moral character is determined. You see thus that all the energies, the business, the industries, the inventions of the world, have really their centre, their inception in the Home: it is the world's animate heart. Erase all homes, all home life, ties, needs, joys, and how long would the wheels of labor and commerce move on? The inventor would drop his useless pursuits,

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the miner's toil would cease, the artisan would no longer ply his useless tools, man would find himself without spur or object in life. How important, then, is every Home! what a tremendous responsibility surrounds its founding! how needful to count the cost! What have you in yourself of reserve force to make this new home a root of blessing? Count the cost, whether you have wherewith to lay a solid foundation and build a goodly superstructure."

"Mercy!" cried Helen; "if I faced such responsibilities, I should be frightened to death."

"Let us begin at the foundation," said Miriam; "tell me, what is the first thing needful in starting a home?"

"The first thing," said I, "is sound moral principle. Let me tell you that I do not believe there are impregnably good principles that are not established on religion as a basis. The heart is so deceitful, and temptations are so strong, that unless the soul is braced with religion, principle is not secure of withstanding the onset of the world, the flesh and the devil. The true ideal of the home, then, is its inception in two who are Christians, and who have a oneness of religious belief. True, there have been very happy homes where parents held different dogmas; but now we are speaking of the best that can be brought together for the founding of the model home, and we say first a oneness of religious principle. Religious principle, which takes the 'thus saith the Lord' as an *ultimatum*, is a family anchorage not on shifting sands. The Divine Law is a court of appeal by whose decisions all the household will abide, and thus, where there is oneness of religious principle, the wedded pair have confidence in and for each other; they have found a solid rock stratum whereon to set up their new HOME."

"Well, aunt," said Helen, "both Miriam and Mark are members of the same church. Now I don't look at that in the light that you do, and I shall not refuse Frank Hand because I am a church-member and he is not."

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"Why should you?" demanded Hester; "have you ever in any way put yourself out for your church membership?"

I hastened to forestall a dispute. "Yes," I said, "Mark and Miriam have that oneness of religious principle which I demand as the foundation of a good home."

"You are unromantic," said Helen; "I should have thought you would have said *love* came first. What an idea, for a man and woman to set up a model home with love left out!"

"If they have sound religious principle they will not marry without love, because they will know that God demands deep and abiding love in a married pair—love that will not grow cold nor weary. Love that has no basis in religious principle will often prove a passion, fleeting as night-shade blooms, leaving only some seed of discontent. Those who have religious principle, recognizing the sacredness and the lasting nature of the marriage bond, will be very sure that they are not marrying for whim, for passing fancy, or from motives of convenience, but that they are really choosing from the world one whom they love better than all the world, whom they can take for better or worse, until death do them part. Therefore, having sound religious principle as the rock-basis whereon to build, we lay in loyal love the corner-stone of Home."

"Miriam," said Helen, mischievously, "have you that love?"

Hester came brusquely to the rescue. "As Miriam has not frittered away her emotions in flirtations, as she has not shown her low estimate of love by breaking two or three engagements, we will believe that at twenty-two she knows her mind, and only accepts a suitor to whom she gives a heart which she has carefully guarded as a thing of worth."

"Hester," I said, "young as you are, you are older than these other girls in your opinions."

"I have lived with books and not wasted my time with silly people," said Hester, scornfully.

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"I'm afraid you are getting hard and cynical, my poor child," I said; "what will become of you!"

"Never mind me," said Hester; "continue to instruct these other two on the subject of a Home."

"Love so enduring and ardent as fits it to be the Home's corner-stone, must be the result of something more than a hasty fancy: love should be built on sincere respect, and this should arise from thorough acquaintance. This respecting love does not claim the perfection of its object, because those worthy of our heartiest and most admiring affection may have many faults; but they are what may be called superficial faults--they are not the *crimes* of falsehood, meanness, cruelty, self-serving or unfaith. To have a proper groundwork for love in a thorough acquaintance, young people should not rush into engagements after a short intimacy, else in a little while longer they may discern that there is no congeniality between them. Neither do I believe in engagements formed between the very young. Young people change so between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one, that they can hardly be recognized as the same persons. Especially if they are parted from each other during this period of changing tastes, they will grow into great unlikeness: in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred neither will become the ideal of the other, and neither will prove to be that manner of persons which they were once supposed to be by the other. Under these conditions the engagement trammels them, and can only be productive of misery. I should say, then, let an acquaintance as long as possible, or long enough to promote a thorough understanding of each other's character, precede a matrimonial engagement."

"And then," interrupted Helen, "just long enough time to get your *trousseau* in good order."

"Not so fast, my dear. I do not advocate what is called a *long* engagement, but *not* so short a one as a few weeks occupied by shopping, dress-makers and milliners. I should want time

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enough for the young people to calmly lay their plans, further count the cost of their new undertaking, and grow into greater oneness of opinion and object. Life is full of trials and reverses; constantly things are occurring to give love a rude shock, and care should be had that the love is so well settled in knowledge and esteem, that it will deepen and not lessen by trials; that it will endure with patience; improve with time, like good wine; that it will, like the morning and the path of the just, grow brighter and brighter."

"I am afraid," laughed Helen, "that a few months engagement would give me time to change my mind. I should see my beloved's imperfections so clearly as to decline further acquaintance."

"Better change your mind, if you change at all, before you are married than after, and get into a divorce court," said Hester.

"Why, Miss Lawyer, I supposed *you* were strong-minded, and did not decry a divorce court," retorted Helen.

"I've a mind to shake you!" cried poor Hester, in a rage. "A woman who has really strength of mind will be strong enough to see that all that defies God's law is really weakness. Divorce is wicked, but no wonder it is frequent when so many people jest at being variable and fickle."

"We interrupt aunt," said Miriam. "How shall true love show itself in home-building?"

"Love, like faith, shows itself by works: now what capital have you in yourself wherewith to build up for your love a worthy Home? What material have you in yourself to enable you to show your love? Love desires the happiness of its object. What have you to ensure that happiness? My Miriam has just said rather sadly that she and Mark have no capital. I think in this counting of the cost of the Home Building, I have just shown you that religious principle whereon to build is the first part of the capital needed, and Love as a corner-

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stone comes next. Courage, then, Miriam; possibly you may discover that you are a larger capitalist than you thought! Happiness is largely dependent upon health. Here one would hesitate to lay down arbitrary rules, for there are so many circumstances which alter cases: and yet, as health is so largely a spring of happiness; as sickness or constant feebleness brings so much misery into homes; and especially as so many diseases are hereditary, and the unhealthful parent entails a physical curse on his children to the third and fourth generation—I should say, that where people know themselves the heritors of scrofulous diseases—of insanity, or manias, or other hereditary ills—then they would do well, early in their history, to choose for themselves a single life."

"But suppose a woman preferred to care for the last days of one whom she loved?" said Miriam.

"As I said, rules cannot suit every case," I replied.

"Pity that her affections should have been entangled by one who ought not to marry," said Hester.

"Yes; because the sacrifice of herself *may* entail the life-misery of her children," said Helen, soberly.

I continued.

"Is it very heroic or honorable for a feeble young man, especially without capital to bequeath to a family, to marry, and having been nursed and mourned over by his wife for a few years, to die, leaving an impoverished widow, with several sickly children? Would it not have been a nobler part for this young man to control his expectations and desires, to accept the lot which was laid upon him, to mingle only generally in society, devoting himself especially to no one, and, bearing his own burden, go out of the world glad of this at least, that he had not made others sharers in his diseases?"

"My father says," remarked Hester, "that this rule should hold for those who have a love of alcohol, or who have klepto

mania. Who would wish to raise a family of thieves or of drunkards?"

"I think, on the whole," said Helen, "that more feeble girls than young men marry, and that men are the ones who ignorantly or intentionally are deceived. It is not so, aunt? Look at that side of the question."

"A young man making his way in the world finds the struggle hard enough: how much harder is it when he marries some girl who seems as healthful and happy as others, but who knows herself that she has organic disease, some insidious madness hanging over her, which, speedily developed by the cares and burdens of life, keeps her a helpless invalid, entailing her miseries on her children? Such young folks would be likely to live longer, and more comfortably, and surely with less anxiety, and less cause of self-reproach, if they had remained single. Friendships, activities, social pleasures, and philanthropies were open to them, wherein they might serve God and humanity. It is a vile selfishness to marry merely to be taken care of! So. Miriam, as you and Mark are, so far as you both have experience of yourselves, sound in body and in mind, you have at once a very large portion of that capital needful for upbuilding a happy and long-enduring Home."

"Thanks to you, aunt, who have prepared me to meet life courageously in my new Home."

"That Home, Miriam, you are to build up within, while Mark builds without. On his part is needed business knowledge and ability in whatever line of life he has chosen, and some settled line of life already entered upon. A man has a right to ask a woman to share humble circumstances with him, if she loves him well enough to do so, and if he is honest in telling her exactly what his means are; but no man has a right to offer any woman half of *nothing:* he has no right to be a pauper himself nor to make other people paupers. A healthy, industrious

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young couple can live on very little money indeed; they can save and they can earn, but there should be *something* to save and *some means* of earning, and that 'something' and those 'means' should be equally and fairly understood by both Especially no young couple should start in life burdened *by debts.* Expenses in a household are likely to increase and not diminish. Nothing so breaks the spirit as a load of debt. Let every young man clear off the last dollar of his debts before he takes a wife. It is safe in very many cases, we might say in every case, where the young pair are healthful, industrious and economical, to start without any cash capital, if there is in the young man's possession some reliable business, with its reasonably settled gains; but it is not safe to start hampered by any debts. 'Owe no man anything—but to love one another.'"

"Well, Mark has no debts, and he has a business," said Miriam, with a sigh of relief.

"While Mark in his daily business, which furnishes him a reasonable prospect of support, builds up his Home from without, do you, Miriam, know how to build it up *within?* What do you know about housekeeping? If it is Mark's to make money, it is yours to spend it judiciously: to save it so far as you can, without sacrifice of comfort and decency. Will you be able to take his income and out of it produce in your home refinement, taste, plenty, good order, strict economy, and achieve at least Micawber financiering, which will save a dollar out of the year's allowance? That is, will you fall *within* the income, even if it be by never so little, and not fall *without* the income, even if it be by never so little? This, Miriam, can be done only if you are prepared like the wise women in Proverbs to look well to the ways of your household; to look at them *understandingly.* You must know *how* everything should be done, even though you may not have to do it yourself. If you rely on telling your maid to make good bread, and yet do not yourself know how

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that is to be done, you are likely to have poor bread, or bread wastefully made. If you tell your servant to be economical, and do not yourself know all the items of economical practice, be sure there will be waste somewhere. Streams do not rise higher than their source, and first-rate housekeeping is secured *only* where there is a first-rate housekeeper at the head of affairs, although she may not personally perform any of the labor."

"This may be pleasing talk to Miriam," said Helen, "but it gives *me* the horrors. What a delinquent am I! bread! economy! financiering!"

I ignored her interruption, and continued:

"Now, Miriam, I consider a true ability for housekeeping, a masterly knowledge of it, one of the finest capitals a woman can bring into a marriage partnership; I should set it against any large cash capital which her husband had, as without it his capital would be likely to be wasted; it should counterbalance grand business abilities on his part, because if it is lacking, capital is not likely to increase by his abilities. Don't sneer, Helen, and mumble that it is 'vulgar, common knowledge;' housekeeping is not vulgar: it is a fine art; it grasps with one hand beauty, with the other utility; it has its harmonies like music, and its order like the stars in their courses. I fear really good housekeeping, which exhibits itself not in occasional entertainments, or a handsome parlor, but the good housekeeping which extends from the attic to the cellar, and through every hour in the year, is far from common.

"So, after religious principle as underlying rock, after love as a corner-stone, after health as a foundation, I say, let us begin to lay up the walls of your home with really good housekeeping on the wife's part, and honest industry in his business, whatever it may be, on the husband's."

"You, aunt, should be able to say whether I am a good house keeper," said Miriam.

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"I should condemn myself, Miriam," I replied, "if I had allowed you to grow up in ignorance of housekeeping. Familiarity, says the proverb, breeds contempt, but it is ignorance of housekeeping which breeds contempt for that art; true familiarity with all its departments begets profound respect for it."

"Aunt Sophronia," demanded Hester, "do you consider good housekeeping and good scholarship incompatible?"

"Surely not," I replied. "Very many most admirable, practical housekeepers are not scholars; scholarship has not come in their way, nor suited their taste; but wherever a woman is a sound scholar, she ought to be therefore the finer housekeeper. Reaching toward perfection in any one thing should lift us higher in all things; it should beget a habit of application and thoroughness. Housekeeping embraces a very large part of our home duties, and we should all feel that nothing is too good and beautiful to be laid on the altar of home. Scholarship produces logical thought, correct taste, order, sound judgment; and all these are needful to good housekeeping, to say nothing of the scientific knowledge required, and which many use imitatively, not knowing that science is concerned. If classical study makes a preacher a better preacher, and a lawyer a better lawyer, it should make a housekeeper a better housekeeper; a woman who could read the Georgics ought not to burn her beefsteak; the training which teaches her to construe an eclogue should bid her take the steak from the fire when it was properly cooked."

"But her mind might be so absorbed in the eclogue as to forget the beef," said Helen.

"That is about as reasonable as to say that because the lawyer learned to scan hexameters, he would suddenly become absorbed in them and forget his business when applying for a writ of habeas corpus."

"You make me think of our Nora," laughed Hester; "father

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cried out to her, 'Nora! your salad is not crisp: it seems wilted; did you have it in water?' 'Faith it was floatin' in the pan better nor half an hour; be that token, some lies there yet,' says Nora. I went to look, and sure enough there it was, but in picking the leaves from the stem she had laid them all face down. I said to her, 'See here, Nora, you must cover these leaves with water, or put them bottom-side down.' 'An' why will I do that?' says Nora. 'Because they have no mouths on the upper surface to drink in the water,' I told her. 'If you say so, I'll put 'em so,' said Nora, 'but it's not meself iver see a mouth in a salad leaf, here nor yet in ould Ireland, where ivery-thing is made right.'"

"Well, Hester," said I, "you see that botanical knowledge did not come amiss in the kitchen; neither does artistic knowledge, for I was at Mrs. Burr's lately and saw on her tea-table a salad served with a wreath of blue violets around the edge of the platter, and a cluster of lilies of the valley in the centre; the dish was as lovely as one of those paintings for which she receives such great prices, and as for flavor, it was the finest salad I ever ate, while the whole table looked beautiful in its beauty. But to go on with our discussion of the capital needed for founding a home. In the housekeeping I have included order and neatness, for that is half the whole; merely to know how to cook food is *not* good housekeeping. Economy will be especially demanded of young people who have no fortunes but in themselves. Are you capable of self-denial and self-sacrifice? Can you be cheerful while others, your friends, make a greater display and have more showy pleasures? Can you be resolute to save a little every year, even if it is very little indeed? This strength of character which can attain to self-denial, to persever-ance, self-sacrifice, is fine capital for the founding of a home. Can you sew? Can you cut out garments? Can you make, mend, and re-make? Rich or poor, every woman should know

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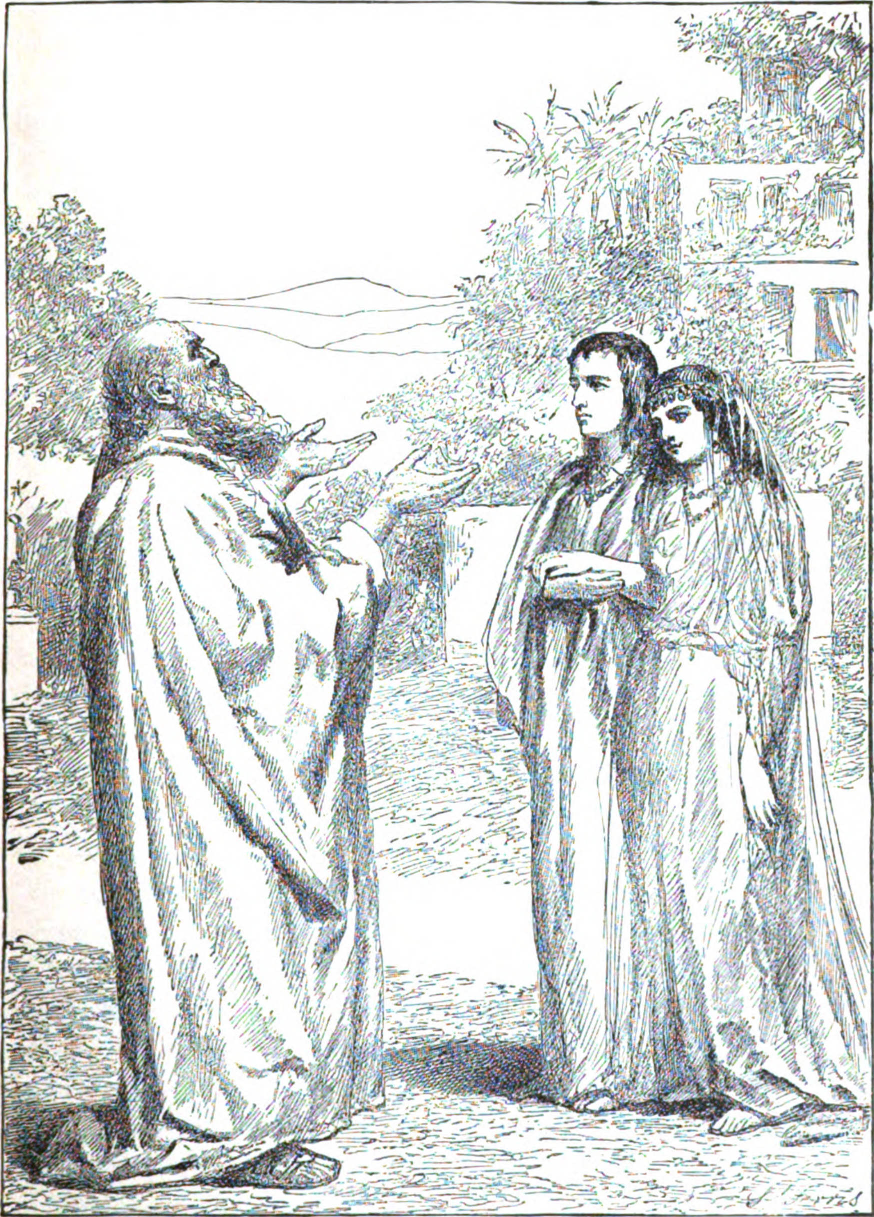

DAVID'S PRAYER.

"Let it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant that it may continue forever." *Page* 31.

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how to do this; if she is rich, she may be poor some day and need the knowledge, or she can now do this work for the objects of her charity, and so increase her means of usefulness. Burns, in the world's loveliest pastoral, says, his house-mother 'gars auld claes look amaist as good as new.' You who begin in humble fashion shall move on this road of tasteful, neat economy in your clothing toward the virtuous woman's height of 'clothing her household in scarlet, and making herself coverings of tapestry, and her clothing silk and purple.' While in the olden time the housewife 'laid her hands to the spindle and held the distaff,' now machinery performs for her these labors, and she can devote herself to cutting and fitting, darning, basting and turning, satisfied that to save is to gain; and if she saves for love and duty's or holy charity's sake, she makes the work beautiful and honorable. Every woman should be a good seamstress as well as a good housekeeper, whether she be obliged to use her needle herself or not. There is a growing neglect of nice hand-sewing, and I know young women who are not ashamed to proclaim that 'they don't know how to make a button-hole, and their hemming looks like witches.'"

"Well," laughed Miriam, "I can sew: so that's more capital."

"Another important item in founding a home is, that the young people have and cultivate equable, cheery dispositions, that their homes be bright and attractive. A gruff, fault-finding, never-pleased man makes his home hateful; a morose, querulous, spiteful woman makes her home equally hateful. If such dispositions are in you, you must conquer them for the sake of Home comfort, that over your Household may rest the blessing of peace. Cultivate also for your home, intelligence; there are other matters of interest needed to converse about than the price of potatoes and the draught of the kitchen chimney.

"Stories generally end with the marriage-ring, but here the

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most important story of life begins. After the marriage-ring come the greatest beauties of self-sacrifice, the strength of perseverance, the heights of courage, the tenderness of sympathy, the need of patience. Search yourselves and see whether you have in your hearts the germs of these things, which need may develop into luxuriant growth. Have you in yourselves the essentials for the founding of a home? Have you any home-making capacity? If not, then, out of consideration for the world's already sufficiently great burden of misery, don't marry.

"But if you can look honestly at the future, see that it will not all be love-making and plenty and pleasure, but that

> 'No lot below
> For one whole day escapeth care;'

that there will be clouds with the sunshine, and want mixed with plenty, and sorrow with joy, and pain with comfort; and if you find you have in you ability to

> 'Make a sunshine in a shady place;'

if you can see two walking courageously together because they be agreed, lifting up each other when they fall, standing by each other in disaster, and liking good better because it is shared—then marry; and there will be one more true Home in the world, one more source of good, one more fountain of joy to generations to come; the state and the world will be the better for you and for your Home."

"Why!" cried Hester, in her dashing way, "who is sufficient for these things?"

"All honest hearts who are capable of loving, and are courageously resolved to do, day by day, their very best, living down their disasters, and repairing their mistakes."

"I see," said Miriam, "why you do not want the whole time of an engaged couple consumed in preparations of dress and

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house-furnishing, that leave them no time to *think*, when the subject is of so great importance."

"If you take it so seriously, Miriam," said Helen, "you will grow as perfect as Aunt Sophronia's model, Mrs. Winton. As for me, thinking of so many duties would make me gray in a week. I think I shall have to risk the married state without finding in myself any particular capacity for it."

So in this world we walk according to our lights. Does the light burn low because we were started in life with very little oil in it, or because we have not been taught to tend and trim it properly? Miriam is a very different girl from Helen, and *I* will not say it is my training that has made the difference. However, such as they were they married: Miriam and Mark, and Helen and Frank Hand. Frank and his wife had the most money; but Mark and Miriam had what I called the most real capital for the founding of a home—good religious principle, true love, health, knowledge of housekeeping and business, industry, economy, courage, intelligence, good dispositions; they were not perfect, but very fair samples of humanity. Miriam and Mark had a plain wedding and no wedding tour. They had a snug little cottage into which they went on their marriage day, and I called that evening to bid them "good-night." As I went away I prayed David's Prayer: "Let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue forever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it, and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed forever."

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CHAPTER II.

ORDER IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S IDEAS OF TIME-SAVING.

I HAD invited my three nieces to spend my birthday with me. During dinner Hester informed us that she was going away to school, and expected to remain most of the time for four years.

"Ridiculous!" cried Helen: "you will then be past twenty, without having been in society; at what age do you expect to be married at that rate?"

"I have set no period for that important event," said Hester, with her lofty smile. "However, I have in my reading happened upon a deal of advice on that subject, and I find that physicians and other wise people consider from twenty-two until twenty-five the best age for marriage, and they assert that many evils of early deaths, feeble health, unhappy homes, sickly children, and so forth and so on, result from premature marriages."

"If you must go to school," said Helen, deserting the first question, as she always does when Hester begins to argue, "I hope you will learn music. Every one does, and you will seem dreadfully stupid and unfashionable if you cannot play."

"I shall not study music, as it would be a waste of time and money," replied Hester; "only those who have some aptitude for music should study it; as for me, I have neither voice nor ear, and why should I drill on an art where I can never achieve success? Why study music merely because it has become the fashion to pretend to pursue it? If I spend on music

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two hours a day during my four years' course, I spend two thousand five hundred and four hours, and four hundred dollars upon music, and then can only *drum* on the piano, and not play with taste and sympathy. All those hours and that money, on the other hand, might put me in possession of some branch for which I have real aptitude. Folks should study what is suited to *themselves*, to their own needs and abilities, not merely something that other people study. Goethe says, 'We should guard against a talent which we cannot hope to practise in perfection.'"

"Well, there is painting, Hester," said Miriam: "you have a real taste for the beautiful art."

"I have taste, but no genius," said Hester; "I can appreciate what other people do, but I cannot create beauty myself; I should be merely a mediocre artist, and there are plenty of *them* in the market. Now, I have ability for scholarship; natural sciences and languages are my delight; therefore I shall pursue that in which I can succeed."

"Is it better," asked Miriam, "to know something of everything, or everything of something?"

"Absolutely, one can do neither," I said.

"Well, within human limitations, understood."

"It is better," said Hester, "to know everything of something, for thoroughness is in itself a great virtue, and will enter into all your life, making one in all things painstaking and honest."

'This devoting yourself to one thing, however," said Helen "will make you one-idead, crotchety, a hobby-rider, and you will be detestable."

"These people of one idea have been the people who moved the world," retorted Hester.

"The fact is, my dear girls," I interposed, "no one branch of study stands isolated; it reaches out and intermingles and takes hold of others. Hester's ideas are in the main correct; study

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that for which you find in yourselves most aptitude; aspire to completeness in whatever you undertake; value knowledge, and seize whatever comes in your way, and put what you acquire to use as fast as you can. The Lord found great fault with the servant who buried his talent in a napkin."

"What do you suppose his talent was?" asked Helen.

"Time, perhaps: the one talent common to all."

"And what was the napkin wherein he buried it?" asked Hester.

"Disorder, doubtless; for you can bury more time in disorder than in any other way."

"I must be very disorderly, then," laughed Helen, "for since I went to housekeeping I have no time for anything; you have no idea how behind-hand I am. I have not opened my piano except on a few evenings; I have a whole basketful of accumulated sewing, and hose for darning; I haven't read anything but two or three novels; I have not done a bit of fancy-work—"

"My dear girl!" I cried, "if this is your record now, what will become of you when cares increase?—say, for instance, if there were two or three little ones."

"I'm sure I don't know," said Helen; "I should have to set up another servant or two, and then we should be bags of rags, and all our buttons would be off, I expect."

"Indeed, Helen," I urged, "there must be a sad mistake somewhere if you have reached this result. Living here in the village, with but two in the family, you have a very modicum of household cares; what think you of young wives on farms who have chicks to feed, several hands to cook for, butter to make, oftentimes no servant, or but a young girl? and yet nearly all of them would make a better showing than this. I remember when Cousin Ann's three elder children were little things, and she kept but a half-grown girl, there were no rags and no mending in arrears, and all the farm-work being done by half-past

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two, she could sit down to make or mend, and in the evening pick up a book or a newspaper. She made a point of reading as much as she could, so as to be able to interest and instruct her children. Her son Reed's wife has a young child and keeps no help; she sends butter and eggs to market, and manages so well in all her work that she has spare hours for making pretty and useful things for her house, for reading, and for doing all her own sewing, and not being behind-hand with it. Depend on it, the secret lies in industrious order—in what is called good management."

"But I cannot understand it, Helen," said Miriam: "your house has only ten rooms beside the bath, and you keep a servant: where does your time go?"

"How can *I* tell where it goes, when I never can find it?" grumbled Helen. "I dare say *you* don't understand it. Why, aunt, there is Miriam doing the most of her own work; no matter when I go there, the work is all done; the house is neat as a pin; Miriam is sitting at her reading or her sewing; she has made perfect gems of fancy things that stick here and there in her house; even in her kitchen she has fancy wall-pockets for string, paper and little bags; fancy holders, a pincushion hung by the window, a crocheted scrap-bag, and, if you'll believe me, always a bouquet in the window!"

"Why not have it nice?" said Miriam. "I have to be there often, and I can work faster where things are handy, and enjoy myself better when things are pretty. Why should I run up-stairs for every pin I want, or look five minutes when I need a string, or have scraps of rag and paper stuffed in corners for want of a convenient bag to put them in?"

"What amazes me is," said Helen, "where you get the time for all these things."

"I got it from Mrs. Burr for a wedding gift," said Miriam.

"Do explain: I wish she had been as liberal to me."

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"She sent me a book of her own making, two boards of gray Bristol, bound in red satin and painted with one of her lovely landscapes. Inside was only a single page: that was white Bristol, illuminated with a wreath of flowers, bees and butterflies, and this motto within: 'Always be one hour in advance of your work.' I saw at once that here was the key to the Order that reigns at Mrs. Burr's. If I were an hour beforehand with work I should never be hurried nor worried; if I began at once, the habit of being in season would be fixed. I saw also that the one hour would by good judgment in planning grow to many, and I should always have time to spare. I concluded to think the housekeeping matter out and have an exact routine for it; it was little trouble to do that: I had only to copy Aunt Sophronia: she always had exact order here."

"But I hate routine," yawned Helen.

"Then you hate what you never tried," quoth Hester.

"I believe," cried Helen, "that it is all my servant that makes the difference. You, Miriam, are not plagued with a girl. I dare say, Hannah has no order about things, and then, she is so slow!"

"But you, as her mistress," I said, "have a right and a duty to arrange an order, and see that it is maintained; if there is no order, of course she will be slow; disorder is the slowest worker in the universe. Have you any fixed time for anything? When do you breakfast?"

"When the breakfast is ready," cried Helen, "and the same for dinner and tea; only Hannah is prompter with tea, so that she can get out."

"And on what day do you make your bread?"

"Why, when the bread runs out, and usually Hannah 'forgot,' or 'didn't know,' or something of that kind, and we have a day of baker's bread."

"And do you not look after the state of the bread-box and see

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that Hannah minds her work? Do you not know how many loaves you need weekly, and have a regular day for baking, one day before the bread is out, so you will not cut hot bread and gain dyspepsia thereby, while you waste bread? And what day have you for sweeping?—what day for washing?"

"Well, I try to have Monday for washing-day, and Friday for sweeping, but sometimes we find ourselves out of all pie, cake and bread, and then we have to make a change. And if I go off Friday morning expecting Hannah to sweep, I come home, and perhaps she has done something else—dear knows what; and then Saturday all is flurry, and I have no decent place to sit down to my mending, and it is put off until the next week, and then I am tired, and there is a great deal of it to do, and so it goes on."

"All the result of not having a time and a place for everything; a lack of plan and energy on your part, Helen, is ruining your servant, and your domestic comfort. A Household should have laws like the Medes and Persians, which never change; and privileges which are like an Englishman's house, an impregnable castle," I said.

"Miriam," I asked, "what and how much do you read and study?"

"We take two monthly magazines and a daily paper, and I read those regularly; and Mark and I enjoy talking over the news and the various articles at meal-times."

"Why," exclaimed Helen, "I haven't read a paper since I was married, and Frank might as well talk about the affairs of the moon as of daily news, for all I know of it!"

"Then Frank will begin to go from home for company," I said; "by all means read, Helen, and have something to talk about beyond Hannah and the butcher."

"Go on, Miriam: what else do you read?" said Hester.

"I arrange for an hour each morning, except on Saturday,

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for study, and I spend half of that hour on French, and the other half on History. It is very little, and would not satisfy such a student as you, Hester, but it serves to keep those studies fresh, and I gain a little. Then I have always on hand a book or two: the popular book of the month, or something that Mark has read and likes, or that some one who knows about books has recommended to me, and that keeps my mind fresh and active. I get what books and articles I can on housekeeping, on cooking, furnishing, decorating, repairing, window gardening, anything that will serve to improve our home at small cost, or save expense, and introduce variety; and I have set up a scrap-book of valuable items."

"But where do you get the time? for I often find you at sewing or fancy work," said Helen.

"I took from the very first an hour a day for sewing; that so far does for my mending, and keeps me with work in advance finished. When I feel inclined for fancy work, and on rainy days when there are no calls, and in evenings when friends drop in I can do a good deal, if it is all at hand in my basket. I go out every day, sometimes in the morning, to give the orders at the grocer's and market, and as I keep a list of needs in my kitchen-book, I am saved the trouble of frequent errands; and one afternoon in a week I give to social duties, calls, visits and the like; and so I find time for everything."

"Because you have a time for everything. Are not your meals at a set time? Don't you have a set time for each kind of house-work?" asked Hester.

"On Monday my laundress comes early. She washes our clothes—of course it is a small wash. While they are drying, she scrubs, blacks the stove, cleans windows, or does anything I want her to do. Then in the afternoon she irons the clothes; after tea I mend them and put them away. She is a strong, active woman, able to give a good day's work, and I pay her

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considerably over the ordinary price for the sake of thoroughness and despatch. She finds everything ready for her work when she comes, and with a cup of hot coffee for her dinner, she gets done without over-fatigue."

"Why Hannah dawdles all day over just our little wash," complained Helen.

I resolved to find out some time the "reason why" of Hannah's "*dawdling*."

"Friday is my sweeping-day; and on Saturday I bake bread, pies, cake, apples, a variety of things," said Miriam.

"And you do all your own work besides?" asked Helen.

"The laundress' boy comes to clean the front-steps and the grass-plot—he does any little thing I need."

"Dear me! and your hands don't look any the worse for it, either," said Helen.

"I take care of them," said Miriam. "I have a mop for the dishes, and a high-handled scrubbing brush for pots and pans, and a cork two inches high for polishing the knives—and nothing is so nice for knives as corks for the bath brick and the after rubbing—and I use gloves when I sweep and dust, and whenever else I can. I shall not sacrifice my hands needlessly, nor shall I sacrifice my work to save my hands."

"Now tell me why you don't keep a girl?" asked Helen.

"As a matter of economy," said Miriam. "Mark has only a thousand a year. We *could* keep a girl, and he urged it; but I am amply able without the least injury to myself to do this work. If we kept a servant, with the wages, the board of the servant, and the fact that she would, however well watched, be less saving than I am, our living expenses would be increased by one-third. Without the servant we can lay up something, and we can buy more books, and give ourselves various little gratifications. There was, in fact, nothing to sacrifice but a little false pride, and I dared to be independent."

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"Why is it that maids are bound to be less economical than their mistresses?" asked Hester.

"Because *their* money is not invested in the housekeeping," said I; "the dollar saved will not go into their pockets; so, even with average honesty and economy, they will throw away far more than the mistress. Human honesty is a curious affair, and embraces very many degrees. 'The cloak of truth is lined with lies,' saith Longfellow's 'Aromatic Jew.'"

"You remind me of our Nora," said Hester. "I met her going out with a pail of milk: she said, 'Sure the bye left me Ann Skinner's pint, and her *me quart*. Troth I'm on me way to change the same.' 'I should think,' I said, 'that Ann would have seen the error before now; he left her the milk first.' 'An' *why* should Ann see it?' says Nora: '*she has the quart.*'"

"Just give me, Miriam," I said, after we had laughed at Nora's logic, "a sketch of your day."

"We rise at seven; by eight breakfast is ready, and while it was cooking I had set the table and put my bed-room in order. Always by half-past nine, sometimes sooner, my work is done. Then I take my hour's study. After that I sometimes go out for shopping, or leaving orders. If not, I sew an hour. Then I begin to get dinner, and intermixed with that comes generally half an hour or so, while things are cooking, when I can read. After dinner is out of the way I dress up for afternoon; if I have not been out in the morning, I go out then; if I have, or it rains, I have fancy-work or reading to occupy me. I do not usually cook anything for supper, except the tea. I have cake, fruit, cold meat, sandwiches, salads; there are plenty of nice, simple things; if there is a salad, I prepare it while I am getting dinner. Before I go to bed I go to the kitchen, see that the tea-kettle is filled, put the rice, or cracked wheat, for breakfast, to soak, and get the potatoes ready; this takes me only a few minutes and saves me a deal of time in the morning. If Mark had to be at

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his business before nine, or did not come home until the five o'clock dinner that some have, of course I should only get myself a lunch, and there would be a deal more time for the books or needle-work, but I have plenty of time as it is. Saturdays I neither study nor sew; I have the baking, which takes al the morning, and I go up-stairs for a while in the evening to sort and mend the clothes for Monday's wash. Friday I sweep, and that uses up the time of the walk, the reading and the fancy-work. But I always have time to go anywhere with Mark, or to see our friends, or for anything extra. I never feel hurried at all—thanks to Mrs. Burr's rule, and yours, aunt, of having a set time for everything, and a place for everything."

Our conversation had extended past dinner and nearly through the afternoon.

For some weeks thereafter I was absorbed by Hester's preparations for departure. In her own and her father's atrocious neglect of proper dress, I feared she would go off deplorably shabby. I poured out my complaints to Mrs. Winton. "See how Hester looks: her clothes have no fit; John is so absurd in his ideas; the girl never dresses like other people."

"The evil is not in Mr. Rocheford's ideas," said Mrs. Winton: "he is right in the opinion that the human figure should be allowed a natural development, without any compressions; vigorous health and true beauty of form will thus be secured. You have often admired the upright and elegant person and carriage of my daughter Grace: she has never worn any article of dress, from a gown to a glove, which pressed upon her, or in any way changed or hindered her natural growth. The trouble with Hester is, that from the extreme of anxiety about dress in which some girls indulge, she has made the rebound of entire carelessness; her clothing is neither properly made nor properly put on. I predict for her the soon reaching a happy mean, and being a model of taste and neatness, while she eschews extravagance and

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display. The good order which pervades her studies will soon permeate all her life : her cultivated taste will direct her to fitness and beauty; it is well for her to go away to school: she will be brought into companionship with some good and congenial woman, who will become her model. It is most dangerous to neglect the greater for the less: Hester has been neglecting the less for the greater; but increased mental training will produce harmony in her mind, and she will give less its full and proper place."

I began to think Mrs. Winton was right, when on going to see Hester, I found how nicely she had packed her trunk. She explained it by stating, that first she had packed her books and pictures handsomely, "because she loved them," and then she thought that the care which was good for them would serve as well for other things, and so I found her surveying with much satisfaction the work of her hands.

As I heartily abhor an untidy woman, I gave Hester some advice about clean collars properly put on, neat hair, and the excellence of neck-ties and white aprons. I said to her: "Hester, there is neither honor nor advantage in the neglecting of little things. God makes the flower which is to perish unseen in secret nooks as perfect as that destined to bloom before millions of admirers; he carves with the same exquisite symmetry the shell which is so small as to be almost microscopic, and the great treasure of the sea. God slights nothing. They who love goodness and beauty for their own sakes will slight nothing. An old writer says: 'Manners makyth man.' Chesterfield advises: 'Prepare yourselves for the world as the athletæ used to do for their exercises: oil your mind and your manners to give them the needful suppleness and flexibility: strength alone will not do.' Cultivate graciousness as a duty, and cultivate as a duty also a harmonious neatness and beauty in appearance and in all that you do. People, Hester, judge us by what they see. Let not

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your good be evil spoken of, but let your zeal for knowledge be commended by order and harmony in all that you do."

After Hester was gone I had more time to visit my other two nieces, and as I was lonely I paid more calls than usual to my friends in the village. The subject of Order in the Household was much in my mind, and I quietly gathered up many hints concerning it. I went one Tuesday morning, about nine o'clock, to call upon Helen. As my ring was not answered, I went round to a side door opening into the dining-room, and walked in. The door was open between the dining-room and kitchen, and I saw that Hannah had just finished doing up the breakfast dishes, and was preparing to do the washing, which had been "put off" from the day before. I always send my washing to the kitchen sorted—a bag of coarse clothes, a bag of fine clothes, and the colored clothes and flannels by themselves. This facilitates the work of the laundress; she sees all that she has to do, and she is not delayed in picking the wash over. I trust Helen's style of sending down a wash is peculiar to herself. The door of the back stairs was open, and down these stairs had been flung an avalanche of soiled clothes—towels, sheets, shirts, hose and table linen promiscuously tumbled into the kitchen, and lying along the steps. Hannah lazily gathered up some of these pieces, and dropped them into her tub. A pair of colored hose went in tangled up in Frank's best shirt, and I perceived that Helen's nicest collar was kicked by the unobservant maid into a pile of towels. I saw, also, that the clothes had not been mended; a skirt of Helen's, who wears her white skirts trained and dragging upon the side-walks, had half a yard of the ruffling torn, and hanging in a great loop; and one of the sheets was also rent. I went up-stairs to Helen. She was rocking in the easy-chair in her pretty room, with a face of discontent. She cried, as soon as she saw me, "O, I'm glad to see you. I'm sick of housekeeping, and I'm dreadfully blue: all things go in such

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a turmoil here! Yesterday Hannah did not wash, because she thought it would rain, and now she has hardly begun, and she'll be until tea-time at it, and a helter-skelter dinner too. Then Frank has asked two gentlemen to tea to-morrow, and there should be cake and floating island made, and the ironing will be lying about; it will be noon before Hannah folds the clothes, and only see: I put this lace set in last week, and look how it is torn, and I want to wear it to-morrow, and it will take me forever to mend it."

"Now, Helen," I said, "you need a good plain talking to, and as I shall give it to you, I hope you'll receive it kindly, and profit by it. As for your washing, it should have been done yesterday. Then, if it *had* rained, the white clothes could, most of them, have been left in a tub of light bluing-water, and have been put on the line early this morning, while a frame full of towels, hose and colored clothes could have been dried in the kitchen, and Hannah could be ironing them now. Your maid is disorderly; but don't complain of that, when her mistress has no idea of order." And so I told her how I had seen her clothes tossed into the kitchen.

"Well, aunt, what ought I to do?" asked Helen.

"I should say, go right down-stairs, and yourself sort the clothes that are lying about, and bring those torn pieces up, and mend them before Hannah is ready for them. It takes twice as long to wash ragged clothes as it does to wash whole ones. Just tell Hannah kindly, that you intend to have a new style in the washing, and that she must be brisk, and that all the clothes must be neatly folded in the basket, before she goes out this evening."

Helen, seeing me reach out my hand for her torn lace, with evident intention of darning it, started for her kitchen, and presently returned with the torn skirt and sheet, and set briskly at her mending.

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"Do the skirt *first*, because she will want to wash that first— the starched pieces should have the precedence, as they take longer to dry. Now, Helen, I will mend this set, and hereafter do as I do: I always wash my own lace and fine embroidery. The best intentioned maids will destroy these things sooner than their owner. The maids have neither to buy them nor repair them, and human honesty has its varieties; so does human ignorance. Hannah very likely rubbed this set on the board, and then boiled it. Have a little bag in your bed-room, and throw this kind of finery in it as it becomes soiled. When it has accumulated, put the pieces to soak in weak borax or ammonia water; some evening, wash them up lightly with your hands and fine toilette soap; next morning, scald them. Starch the embroidery, and iron it on the wrong side, laid on a piece of fine flannel The lace, rinse in weak gum-water; stretch it, and pin it on a pillow, though some kinds can be ironed between two pieces of flannel. On washing-days you should insist on having Hannah rise early, and begin washing before breakfast. Have the clothes ready for her in bags; have a breakfast that is easily gotten, and needs few pots and pans. Arrange for a dinner, which shall be but little trouble, and give some help about preparing it; you can set the table, and make the dessert; and so you will encourage your maid, and have a better meal, for there is no propriety in making, by means of bad meals, the washing day a terror to Frank, as if he were an evil-doer.

"To-morrow let Hannah get at her ironing as soon as she has cleared away the breakfast dishes; if her clothes are ready folded in the basket she can go briskly to work; and do you prepare the cake and floating island yourself: there will be a good fire in the range, and you will find it little trouble. In fact, Helen, if you do not turn over a new leaf and have order in your house, your housekeeping will be more and more a misery to you; you will become petulant and moping under the

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burden; Frank will find you less agreeable, and will wonder why his home has no regularity. His clothes and drawers being out of order, and his meals at irregular hours, he will have cause for complaint, and become, by degrees, a fault-finder. Your servant will go from bad to worse, for it is very easy in this naughty world to *improve backwards*—as cares increase, the complications of disorder will increase. Tell me, Helen, have you a place for everything? Are your bureau drawers in order, and has each one its own appointed contents, so that you could find what you want in the dark? In your dining-room, has your china-closet a fixed place for everything? so of your store-closet, and your tin-closet? Have you fixed places for your bed and table linen? Are your kitchen towels in a drawer of their own, or do you and Hannah consume five, ten, twenty minutes here and there looking for things?"

"Dear me!" cried Helen: "very little is in order, and it looks a prodigious task to put things in order, and make Hannah orderly, or be so myself. If I had only begun so when I was married!"

"But it will be a deal easier to reform now than next year; you had better inaugurate order at once."

"You see," continued Helen, "grandma is a good house-keeper, bnt she did not care to be troubled teaching me, and I did not like to be bothered with learning, and we both kept saying 'time enough.' So the chambermaid took care of my room, and grandma did my mending if it was troublesome, and put my bureaus to rights every now and then for me, and now, really, aunt, order is not in me."

"You must attain to it," I said, "or you will have a very unhappy married life. An acquaintance of mine, one of the most prematurely aged, fretted, worn-out women I ever saw, wrecked her home on this rock of Disorder. When I knew her she had six children; not one of them had a drawer or closet for their

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own clothes; the stockings were mended or not, as it happened and when it happened; when mended, pairs were not rolled together, but the family supply tumbled into a basket or drawer, and at the cry, 'I want a pair of stockings,' came the reply 'to go and look for them,' and the little ones wore odd hose as often as mates. Sunday morning was a scene of worry: buttons off, hats mislaid, shoes lost. The muff, last worn in early spring, was tossed upon a wardrobe, or on the spare-room bed, and found next fall dusty and moth-eaten; the parasols, used last on some Fall day, were stood in a closet, or behind a door, or laid on the bureau of the vacant room, and spring found them faded, dirty and mice-gnawed. Spasmodic house-cleanings availed little, as disorder began again as soon as things were put to rights. No one was ever contented nor sure of anything. The house-mother was always tired, never had time, was always in a worry and nervous. A good cook and seamstress, she accomplished nothing by her knowledge, for where she built up by 'knowing how,' she pulled down by disorder. Neither her husband nor children thought their home a 'nice place:' it was to them no centre of their desires, no model, no '*dear nest*,' whither they would always fly. I tell you, Helen, in a Home it must be order or ruin. Order is to the house as morality to the human being—a sheet-anchor."

The next day I went to see Miriam. It was about nine o'clock, and my niece was just taking her place in the sitting-room window. She beckoned me in. I said: "Ah! this is the time when you study."

"That is nothing," she said; "I am always learning when I talk with you. Let us have a morning visit; you shall stay to dinner. I can pursue my sewing and fancy work, and the study can come in by itself some other hour in the day."

Miriam's sitting-room was in lovely order. She is trying window gardening, and had a jardinet in one window in fine

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bloom. A broad board had been screwed upon the window-sill. Mark had made for it a rustic frame three inches high, and Miriam had lined that with moss, and planted in the moss common vines, as "Love Entangled," "Wandering Jew," "Money Wort," and "Parlor Ivy;" these drooped nearly to the floor. Inside the moss lining she had set an old-fashioned square dripping-pan, and filled it with rich earth well piled up; in the centre and in each corner was a green flower-pot with a thrifty geranium or Begonia; and between the pots grew low ferns, blue and pink oxalis, pansies and other things, which did not demand deep rootage. It was a very pretty, cheap and easily-taken-care-of winter garden, and over it hung a very handsome basket of drooping plants. I saw in one corner a rather large basket of work folded into neat bundles. I inquired what it was. Said Miriam:

"My time for sewing more than suffices for myself, so this is some work for the Missionary Society, and for the Children's Home. I have been cutting it out in my spare time for a week past, and now it is ready to sew upon, and as it is here at hand I can set a good many stitches at odd moments. See, here is some pretty work I am doing for our missionary-box. I like to send pretty things away, and I thought the little sums I had to give in this way would go further if I bought material and made it up. If I have more time after that, I will sew on the material of those who have no time to give. After Christmas I shall begin on a set of shirts for Mark. He will not need them before next summer, but you know Mrs. Burr's rule is to be before-hand with your work, and in warm weather one feels less like sewing and there is more company, and Mark and I may take a little vacation."

Miriam went up-stairs for some patterns to show me, and as I heard a knock at the kitchen door I answered it. The kitchen was in beautiful order; the floor was covered with oil-cloth and

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there were rugs of carpet lying before the table, stove and sink. The fire had been arranged to burn low until needed for dinner; the vegetables for dinner were standing ready in earthen basins of water. I was glad to see that the table and the wood work of the sink were covered with oil-cloth. This saves a great deal of time and of hard work in scrubbing. Young housekeepers should remember that they cannot practise truer economy than in investing a little money in things that shall spare them severe labor, and save their time, as for instance, coverings for kitchen floors and tables. I was glad also to see that Miriam had been wise to provide articles for use that were light and easy to handle. Young folks often strain themselves by lifting enormous pots and water-pails, when small, light ones would be far more suitable for a small family. Miriam generally uses white metal saucepans and skillets instead of iron. In her kitchen everything was handy, to spare steps. Mark had been at some expense in fitting up an outer shed-room for a snug laundry, so that the washing should not be in the kitchen, where Miriam had her work. He had had a new drain opened, and bought a stove for this work with a stationary copper boiler, beside the clothes-boiler. Miriam leaves the clothes-bags there, locks the door into the kitchen, and allows the laundress to have one key of the laundry door; therefore, on Monday morning she can come and begin as early as she likes, and she always finds soap, starch, bluing—all that she needs—ready. Now while I was at Helen's the other day, Hannah left her tubs twice to go to the store, once for soap, once for blue. I don't wonder that that girl never gets on quickly with her work. I saw in Miriam's kitchen closet a shelf with plenty of bar-soap cut, and spread to dry, as this saves it in the washing; she never gives the laundress soap that has been drying less than three weeks. It is by small economies and cares, such as this, that large economy is attained. One does not, in a household, make some great fifty,

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or a hundred, or two hundred dollars saving, but it is the little saving of five, ten and twenty-five cent pieces, of half dollars and dollars, which in the year mounts up to a goodly sum total, and these savings represent not *meanness*, but *care;* not cutting down the rations of the hired people, not buying inferior tea and flour, and poor butter whereof less will be eaten, but getting the best, and in quantity, and then allowing no wasting. Miriam has in her laundry closet a tea-pot and a little caddy with some tea, so that her laundress can make herself a cup of tea as soon as she lights her fire, and thus not be forced to work on faint and hungry until after the family have finished their breakfast; a plate of rolls or of bread and butter is left beside the teapot, and thus the working-woman is heartened for her toils, and can comfortably wait for her later morning meal. Miriam says that next spring she means to have breakfast at half-past seven, and as during the summer Mark will have Mr. Cox's place, he will be home for a five o'clock dinner; Miriam says she will then have a deal more time to herself, and she means to do all her own dressmaking, and plans for many other undertakings.

On Saturday, about five o'clock, I called upon Mrs. Burr. I found her in the sewing-room, rolling up a bundle of fragments of cloth. She said:

"The seamstress has been here a fortnight, and has just gone. Congratulate me! all our winter sewing is finished; every item for household or personal wear is complete; the last button is sewed on, and all articles repose peacefully in their places."

"You are early," I said; "it is only the third week in September."

"I always have my summer sewing done in April, and my fall sewing in September; then when hot or cold weather comes suddenly, I shall not hear my household clamoring for garments that are not ready. A careful inventory of our possessions, taken in March and in August, shows me what clothing will be

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needed, and I keep supply always in advance of demand. I begin by cutting out all the work, doing it by degrees as I can spare time. I put the bundles in a large basket here in the sewing-room, and with them the thread, silk, tape, buttons—all the needed materials. The seamstress comes with her machine for a fortnight, and during that stay I devote most of my time to superintending or aiding her work. Then we are done, and before me lies only the light work of weekly repairs."

"Suppose that you could not afford a seamstress?"

"Then I should pursue the same plan, only beginning earlier, and I should put less trimming on the clothes, for I think it is foolish in a house-mother to exhaust her health, and deprive her children of her company, and herself of improvement, merely for the sake of a few tucks, ruffles and puffs, the place of which neat hems and plain edgings can very well supply."

"And when is the House-cleaning coming off?" I asked.

"Next week," said Mrs. Burr; "first the sewing, then the house-cleaning, and if nothing unforeseen occurs, the first of October shall see us ready for winter, our time generally at our own disposal."

"Ah," I said, "with such management I don't wonder that your family of three sons always find the mother ready to be their guide, philosopher and friend; that your house looks as if Fairy Order held the helm; and that you have so much time for beautiful and lucrative work in your studio."

"Well," laughed Mrs. Burr, "I was born with a mània for order."

"Of order," I replied, "it can be said as Shakspeare says of greatness. Some are born orderly, some become orderly, and others have order thrust upon them. You were born with a talent for order. Mrs. Winton says Hester will become orderly, and Miriam was, when I first took her, very disorderly, but by constant training she had order thrust upon her, and now it reigns in her home."

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"Order," said Mrs. Burr, "is called heaven's first law; the Apostle bids us, 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' If knowledge is the mainspring of a home, *order* is the balance-wheel; fully half of Household miseries arise from a lack of ORDER."

Pursuing my investigations in regard to Order in the Home, I concluded that I could not do better than walk out to the Ridge Farm and pay a visit to my Cousin Ann. We do not know who sat for the charming portrait of the wise Woman in Proverbs: Cousin Ann might have done so, if she had been living in Solomon's time. Cousin Ann is some years older than I am, and when I was young I often paid her long visits; also once I spent a winter with her. The eight-day clock, heired from Cousin Reuben Ridge's father, did not run with any more perfect smoothness and regularity than Cousin Ann's household. At first I could not understand why it was that accidents and unexpected occurrences, guests or sickness, never threw the Home into confusion: things went on just the same whatever happened. Cold weather came remarkably early: well, no worry about heavier clothes, for Cousin Ann had made them ready while the weather was *warm*. Some one was called off on a journey: no cries of not being prepared, for Cousin Ann always had clothes in readiness in excess of demand. The family were hungrier than usual, or an extra hand was called in: the bread did not give out and precipitate an extra baking day, because Cousin Ann always baked more than she thought would be needed. I asked her: "And if that 'more' is not eaten at table, is it wasted?" She replied: "Not at all; then I have stale bread for toast, for puddings, for stuffing fowls; when all the bread is eaten, then I make other kind of puddings, stew the fowls instead of roasting them—though they are delightful stuffed with mashed potato—and we go without the toast."

Yes, indeed, the old clock *might* have got out of order,

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though it never did, but Cousin Ann's house could not get out of order. Well, as I said, I set off for Cousin Ann's on a delicious May morning, which made the three-miles' walk seem a very short one. Sarah, Cousin Ann's daughter, was at the machine making summer gowns for her mother and herself. I asked after Hattie, the younger daughter, who is away at school for a year, and then I said: "Cousin Ann, tell me how it is that your work never drags or falls behind."

"Why," says Cousin Ann, "I look ahead and see what is coming, and I keep a little in advance of demand. I don't lose an hour in the morning and expect to make it up in the evening: night is the wrong end of the day to borrow from: work never goes briskly in the after part of the day; in the morning it is cool: we are rested, fresh and strong, and then is the time to get the work out of the way."

"I suppose you have a regular time for everything?"

"I should think so," laughed Sarah: "a regular month for house-cleaning and heavy sewing, and meat-curing and fruit-drying; a regular week for gathering herbs, for putting by winter bedding, and clothes in the big chests—all mended before put by; a regular day for sweeping, cellar-cleaning, baking, churning; a regular hour for milking, hunting eggs, feeding chicks; a regular minute for rising and retiring, for breakfast, dinner and tea; give Hattie the day of the week and the hour of the day, and she knows what we are doing here at home."

"Well," said Cousin Ann, smiling, and setting her pudding in the oven, "that is the way to get through. Nothing is forgotten: nothing is left undone. This, for instance, is the week when the herbs are cut and dried, while they are green and strong; all the neighbors look to me for simple herbs. This week my girl washes the blankets, suns the heavy quilts, and I clean, mend and put by furs, thick clothes, winter hats, and winter bedding, and Sarah finishes the summer sewing. In the

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fall it will be a pleasure to take out clean whole things which have lain packed in camphor and lavender; we also shall be all ready for haying and harvesting with the extra cooking. Just now my girl churns every morning; while she does that, I get breakfast, and little Jack sets the table and brings wood for the box, and feeds the chicks; Sarah meantime is making beds, filling water-pitchers, getting the sitting-room to rights, and the hall and front porch. When we sit down to breakfast the house is clean. As soon as breakfast is over, Jack cleans up the back-door yard, and gets from the garden the lettuce or young greens for dinner: then he's off to school; I, as soon as we finish the breakfast, go to the spring-house to the butter and milk: Sarah attends to the pudding or biscuit baking, or on ironing day sets at the fine ironing, and the girl does up the breakfast-dishes, cleans the kitchen and makes the vegetables ready for dinner. On washing day Dick churns before breakfast so that the girl can get on with the wash. It is easy enough, all of it, if you know fairly what you want done, and how to do it, and then don't dawdle away any time thinking what to do first, and who shall do it."

"I always thought Order was a mainspring in house-work," I said, "and now I am sure of it: how could any one get on with farm-work without it?"

"There are plenty who try it," said Cousin Ann, "and they are fretted sick and grow old before their time, besides being hindered in family comfort, and in making money. And there is another thing to be observed in Order: don't *crowd* work. Notice the clock: it ticks one second at a time, and gives each second its due. Some folks kill themselves trying to wash, iron, bake and clean, all on one day. We bake twice a week, and one of the baking days is also ironing day: that is Tuesday, for it saves having such a big fire on an extra day. When I was doing my own work and my family was smaller I

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never did any baking but bread on ironing day, so as not to over-do myself; now I bake what I please, and Sarah and the girl do the ironing. I can tell you, Sophronia, if mothers would only look at the matter fairly, they would see that an example and habit of ORDER was one of the nicest dowries they could give a daughter: one to prolong her life, to build up her home, and be always a source of comfort to herself and family."

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CHAPTER III.

ECONOMY IN THE HOME.

POUNDS AND PENCE.

I DON'T think our little town ever before saw such truly hard times as we are passing through now. Our bank, which we always thought as safe as the Bank of England, has failed. Its fall dragged down two of our largest mercantile houses. A fire last autumn destroyed a manufactory, where some two hundred of our working-people found employment. The flood in the spring damaged the roads and some of our public works, and so our taxes have increased. There is hardly any one about here that does not feel the pressure of these hard times. ECONOMY must be the order of the day. But what especially strikes me is, the various methods in which people practise their economy, and the different effect it has on their minds. Now some are ashamed of it, and had as soon be caught *stealing* as *saving*.

Among our other troubles, a railroad, in which a good many of us had invested, stopped paying dividends, and so our incomes are lessened. I saw that I must reduce my expenses, and I sat down to consider how. I did not wish to cut down my giving, for the harder the times are the more need there is of charity. I had calculated to lay out about fifty dollars on my winter wardrobe, in work and material. I cut that down to ten, just enough to make over by myself what I had on hand; it would be a pity if I were ashamed to dress according to my means at my time of life. I always had kept a big fire all

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winter in the parlor: it looks well, and I have the room comfortable to see my friends. However, my dining-room is nice and always in order—I can see my friends there: that parlor must be shut for the winter. I keep only one servant, Martha; she is very efficient, and I have paid her very high wages. I said to her: " Martha, my income is much lessened this year, and I cannot pay such high wages as I have done. I think, however, you are worth all you can get, and if you can find another place, where they will give you what you have now, it will be right for you to take it."

Martha said she would think about it. At the end of a week she said she would stay for whatever I could give. She remarked that a good home was a thing worth keeping; that when hard times pressed on everybody, she did not expect to be the only one to escape. She was very sorry that I was pressed for means, for her brother had been thrown out of work and could hardly feed his large family, and Martha had thought of asking me to allow her niece, ten years old, to come to us for her board; that would relieve her parents of her support, and would put the child where, by learning to be a skilled servant, she could be in the way of making her living.

I thought this over. Surely it was a work of charity to help the poor man provide for his children. The little girl would be greatly benefited. In hard times it becomes every one to help his neighbor. I called Martha.

"Martha, if we took Ann, do you think that by a little closer economy in the house we could provide for her board? We have never been wasteful, and we must not be mean; but, possibly, we could manage the cooking a little more economically, and have it just as good, and it will be an advantage for Ann to see the most scrupulous care exercised in the household."

Now this was putting Martha in a position where her interests

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would be my interests. She replied: "Well, ma'am, if you're so kind as to take Ann, I'll not let her cost you a cent, nor make a particle of trouble."

"Very well," I said; "bring her here, and train her carefully, for my niece, Mrs. Rogers, will want a girl some day, and that will be a fine place for Ann, if she is deserving."

Shortly after this, Kitty Merry, a seamstress, came in. She complained of the hard times, and of lack of work. She has a dollar a day with her machine. I asked:

"Do you pay more for your lodging than last year?"

She said, "No."

So I said, "Well, as times are hard, why do you not reduce your price to seventy-five cents a day? People are economizing in everything."

"But I'm worth a dollar as much as ever."

"Very true; but why expect to be the only one who does not feel the pressure? You must sacrifice as do the rest."

"I think it is wrong for folks to begin their cutting down on the work-people," said Kitty.

"All do not begin there. I began on my wardrobe, on the number of my fires, and on my preserves and cake, and then to the wages. You must reflect that there will be even larger demands on our charities than usual. It is better for you to lower your prices, and get full work at seventy-five cents a day, than half work at a dollar; when you are out you get your boarding. An employer finds his income cut down from two thousand to fifteen hundred, and he proposes to pay his servant two and a half instead of three dollars. The servant gets her board and washing just as usual, but cries out against losing one-sixth of her cash income, when the master has lost one-fourth of his. The working-classes refuse to take less wages; the employers presently find that they can get on without hiring servants; suddenly there is a host of the unemployed living on their past

savings, borrowing of each other, or going in debt; and then a loud cry of need and of working-people in destitution arises, and if employers hire them again, it is at a greater reduction than was first offered. Wages *rose* with flush times, and they must *fall* with close times. Masters and servants are virtually in one boat, and must share the same storms and calms."

"Well, Miss Sophronia," said Kitty, "is that fair to divide the servant's little, because the master loses of his much? You say the hired girl loses a sixth of her wages; but it costs her just as much to buy a yard of merino as it does her mistress; and takes just as many yards for her gown."

"It appears to me, Kitty, that people should provide for themselves according to their station in life. I don't see that the maid must buy merino, because her mistress does, nor that she must have three frills and a train, because a banker's wife does. Why, Kitty, must you fret yourself to death for money to buy two or three button kid gloves, and button boots, and aprons with edging, because Mrs. Hand wears them? She always has had these things. In the providence of God she was born to it. You can get good thread gloves, neat hemmed aprons, laced or elastic boots for half the money, and why not be suited with them? As a child you went bare-footed and bare-handed, and wore blue check, and no shame to you; you were always healthy, honest, cheerful, useful and esteemed; why torture yourself to keep pace with fashions of a sphere pecuniarily beyond your reach? Some day you may find large means at your command: be sure you will know how to spend them without any previous practice."

"And," said Kitty, "you think I'd better reduce my prices?"

"Yes, and your expenses. Don't be ashamed of untrimmed, turned, or neatly mended clothes; don't be ashamed of calico. You'll always look like a lady, if you cultivate the manners and scrupulous neatness of a true lady; and nothing is so unrefined as cheap finery."

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Mary Semple came to-day, complaining that she could not get laundry work; people were giving out less; she was out of work, and her expenses were the same as ever. I asked her what she had a dozen; she said, promptly, "a dollar, and for rough-dry, half a dollar, and dresses were extra, and when she went out, a dollar a day." I said to her:

"Just give out that you'll take clothes at seventy-five cents a dozen, and thirty cents for rough-dry, and reduce your price for going out twenty-five cents: you'll get work enough."

"But I'm worth as much as ever," said Mary.

"True; but people cannot give it. Hard times pinch the moneyed classes, and they pass your share on to you; if you won't take it cheerfully in lessened wages, it will be forced on you in no work. Half a loaf is better than no bread. You made no trouble about a rise in wages. I remember when fifty cents was a day's wages, and fifty cents a dozen good pay for washing. What laundress grumbled when prices doubled?"

"I ought to get me work's worth," persisted Mary.

"You can't get something out of nothing," I said; "nor more cash out of a purse than goes in. What you have a right to claim is prompt pay when your work is done. People have no right to ask you to take your pay in driblets when you do the work promptly, nor to keep waiting and coming for your pay when you served them promptly. You estimate people's means by houses which they bought and furnished in flush times. You forget that they have to pay taxes and keep those houses up, and that their property is often an embarrassment in hard times."

"I'd take the property *and* the embarrassment, willing!" cried Mary.

"Very likely; but the Lord has not given us our own choice of evils. If he had we'd manage to make fools of ourselves somehow or other."

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"And you don't know any one to help me, Miss Sophronia," urged Mary.

"Yes, you can help yourself by lowering your prices, and economizing a little closer; so doing you will tide over these hard times."

Wherever I go, whatever caller I receive, there is the same cry of hard times and of economy, and for the last there are dozens of methods. Mrs. Black, for instance, has taken her children out of school, taken a poor servant in place of a very good one, stopped her contributions, given up her church pew, discontinued her magazines and newspapers, while her two grown daughters are just as idle, and the family are just as dressy as ever. Now *she* calls that economy—*I don't.*

I went to see Helen. Frank's salary has been cut down, and his railroad stock is bringing him nothing. Helen was quite unhappy.

"What am I to do?" she cried. "We have five hundred a year less to live on, and I don't know where to lessen expenses. Now I must have a new silk dress: that will cost a hundred dollars."

"Yes," I said; "and then you will want a new set of lace and a new hat to wear with it, and some other new things, and they will be fifty dollars more."

"And where is the money to come from?" queried Helen.

"Why not give up the silk? Your dark-blue and your brown silks are good."

"But I've had them ever since I was married, and how it looks!—always the same old dresses."

"But they are handsome, and with Kitty Merry's help you can put them into this year's style. You will then feel no need of the little extras which the new silk would demand. Your last winter's hat, rejuvenated by your own good taste, would do very well. With no fine new dress to display, you will care less for

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going into society. If you go less, you will be at liberty to entertain less company; and if you entertain less company, your housekeeping expenses will be lessened. Moreover, if you go out less you will have time to attend to your own baby, and you can dismiss your nurse-maid, who is very careless, and is likely to ruin your child, and the little one will thrive better under mother-care. I will lend you my little Ann now and then to help Hannah. If you will give up the idea of the new silk, you will, in its consequences, save some two hundred dollars. You will thus be likely to keep out of debt; and don't hang the mill-stone of debt about Frank's neck: it may ruin him; and with an increasing family, debts will increase instead of being cancelled."

"But dear me, aunt! No nurse-maid! no new clothes! To withdraw from going into, and giving companies! How it will look! It would be an open declaration of poverty."

"Not poverty; but of needed economy, and brave honesty."

"But, aunt, what will people say?"

"Then you get the silk, and you keep the nurse for the sake of strangers' tongues? It is a mere matter of pride? Now, Helen, don't let *pride* get a foothold in your household. What does Franklin say of it? 'Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and twice as saucy. When you have bought one fine thing you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but it is easier to suppress the first desire, than to satisfy all that follow.' Come, Helen: to save is to earn: to earn is your husband's part, to save is yours. Frank will be happier at home with you and his child than out in society; he will like privacy more than the company that is bringing him into debt. 'Every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.' Every house-mother should begin to lay the foundations of her children's fortunes, and not introduce debt as the moth and the rust which will destroy all accumulations."

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"That is true, aunt, but see how mean it makes me feei. There are the Blacks all out in fine new clothes, and Mrs. Westcott has bought new parlor carpet and curtains."

"You mean she has gone in debt for them. Now, Helen, we must not measure our expenses by other people's outlays, but by our own purse. How would you view Martha's wanting a Lyons silk because I wear one? In home living every one is emphatically a law unto themselves. It is a false sentiment which demands display: this emulation in domestic establishments often lays the foundation of ruin. Women ought to be able to create a public sentiment in favor of economy and of a simple and delicate taste in the administration of their homes: they *could* create such a taste only that they are ashamed of practising economy, and *hide it as a crime.* They respect and imitate the showy, rather than the solid. Now, Helen, where you stand three roads meet. Indulge your desires, your emulation of those who spend more than you can afford to spend, and you will pass along the road to ruin. Frank will become a broken and discouraged man, and probably die early and in debt. If you enter into no debts or extravagances, you may keep on just as you are, with a very small margin to work upon, and nothing laid up for a growing family, always in apprehension of disaster. By careful economy, living within your means, saving a little, and being your own law in expenditure, you may enter the road of assured prosperity. The hand of the diligent maketh rich."

"You couldn't get very rich, aunt, with such servants as mine: they waste and break so much."

"Then if you keep one less servant there is so much less of this cause of complaint; if you will go about your own house more there will be less breakage and waste: the eye and hand of the mistress always present is a great safeguard in these particulars. As to breakages, they are the result generally of care-

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lessness, and servants have *no right* to be careless. For their own sakes as well as your own, you should talk the matter over kindly with them, and tell them that they must replace what they break. It is well to know how to excuse, to forgive, and to relax your rule on occasion, but it is no honesty to yourself, nor kindness to your servant, to allow her to recklessly destroy your property. In your house she should be schooled in care and in honesty, so shall she be more fitted rightly to direct her own. Talk over matters with Hannah: tell her frankly that you must use stricter economy; that you shall do without a nurse, and that she cannot have quite so much time for herself; that you can no longer afford to replace her breakages, and that as you shall not allow your narrower means to reduce her wages, you expect her to help you save carefully in your house. Why, Helen, as I came up here, I saw Hannah scrubbing the porches, with half a bar of fresh soap lying melting in her pail; and she explained a terrible smell of smoke in the kitchen, by saying that she was burning up the bone and skin and trimmings of a ham, because 'if she threw them out it made the rats worse, and the rats were eating up all your potatoes.' Now, child, what sort of economy is this? All that rough fat should be saved in a place secure from rats, and Hannah should each month make up a little keg of soft-soap for scrubbing and dish-washing; and Hannah should be taught not to leave her bar-soap melting in the pail; while, as for the rats, you should with a good trap, and caustic-potash laid at their holes, declare persistent war until such destructive pests are banished. If you permit mice and rats to destroy your provisions, and stray cats to ramble into your cellar—as I just saw one doing and returning with the leg of a fowl—there will be in your house a hundred little leaks, which it will take more than a hundred one-dollar bills to stop."

"Oh, aunt, what shall I do!" cried poor Helen.

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"Practise economy as a Fine Art: make a duty and a pleasure of it; it is the mortar wherein you lay up the walls of home; if it is lacking, or is poor in quality, the home building will crumble. Don't be ashamed of economy: study it; consult about it; don't confound it with meanness: economy is the nurse of liberality. Meanness is going in debt for luxury: is keeping behind-hand the wages our work-people have earned: is making a show on the street and withholding charity: is presenting cake and confections ostentatiously to our callers, and stinting the kind or quantity of our servants' food."

Then I invited Helen to take tea with me next day, and meet Miriam and Mrs. Winton.

Then I went over to Miriam's. She was in her spare-room, and called me to come up.

"What, Miriam," I cried, "a handsome new black silk!"

"No, indeed," said Miriam, "it is the old one that I have worn this four years;" and she took it from the bed to display it.

"And how ever did you make it look so nicely?"

"I sponged it with a teaspoonful of ammonia, mixed in half a pint of warm, weak coffee; then I pressed it. I sponged and pressed it on the right side as I meant to turn it. The velvet of the cuffs, collar, pockets, button covers, and so on, is from my old black velvet waist."

"But that was so wrinkled and mussed!"

"I steamed it thoroughly, laying it wrong side down on a wire netting over the boiler, shaking it a little now and then; it made it look almost like new. See, here is my old black cashmere: I ripped it up, washed it in warm water where soap bark had been steeped, and ironed it on the wrong side. I shall get a couple of yards of silk for trimming, and make it as good as new. Here, too, is my ancient brown merino, ripped, sponged and pressed, with a small investment in fringe and velveteen—it must come out a new gown; so I buy nothing this fall. You

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know Mark expected two hundred dollars advance in his salary, and instead, he gets one hundred less, so I must economize closer than ever. Mrs. Burr told me how to rejuvenate my gowns, and she has taught me several new ways of economizing for my table."

"Mrs. Burr is a perfect Domestic Encyclopædia," I said. "Pray tell me some of her suggestions: I am myself retrenching, in my own behalf, and for the sake of my neighbors."

"The first thing I think of is cheese," laughed Miriam. "Mark is extravagantly fond of it, and we pay eighteen cents a pound. Mrs. Burr says she cuts two or three pounds up into squares, and puts it in a very dry place; then it always is *grated* before it comes to the table. Used in this way, it is much more delicate than cut in pieces, and one pound of cheese goes further than two as generally used. Sometimes she varies the dish by mixing a little parsley, chopped very fine, among the grated cheese. She says her physician told her that people do not understand the virtues of parsley: it is excellent for the nerves, and for use in rheumatism, and should be constantly used in preparing dishes. I have learned from Mrs. Burr to make several new soups; and a white soup made of fresh bones, with rice, a little macaroni or tapioca, chopped potatoes and chopped parsley in it, is delightful, if you put a tablespoonful of catsup and a teaspoonful of grated cheese in each dish as you serve it. The last time I took tea at Mrs. Burr's, she had a very pretty dish of bread, cut thin in diamonds or rounds, spread with butter, and then with grated cheese, and laid on a little china dish, with a wreath of parsley around it."

"I remember," I said, "that Hester told me she should, in her housekeeping, use a deal of parsley, because the ancients did so; that both Virgil and Horace note it as holding an honorable place at festivities."

"Mrs. Burr," continued Miriam, "knows how to use up little

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things in her household, in a very appetizing way. You know one often has a little jelly left from a meal, or from making a cake—only a spoonful or two goes a good way, attractively, if bread is cut thin in pretty shapes, and spread lightly with the jelly. Mrs. Burr said when her children were little these 'jelly breads' were their delight, and often served them in place of rich cake or meat at tea, which she did not think safe so near their bed-time, while the good bread, spread with fruit-jelly, was wholesome for them. The last time I was at Helen's, Hannah had thrown away half a loaf of bread and a dish of broken pieces, which she said were getting mouldy, and were of no use. I sent her two recipes which I had from Mrs. Burr. Here they are."

Miriam handed me her note-book, and I copied the recipe for—

Bread Sauce.—"Cut stale bread in fine pieces; mix with it pepper, salt, sweet herbs, a little fine chopped onion, if desired; moisten with warm water, and stir in meat-gravy or soup-stock until it is nearly as soft as bread-pudding; bake half an hour. If more convenient, milk and butter can be used instead of the gravy."

The other recipe was—

Bread for Breakfast.—"Dry pieces of stale bread until they are hard all through. When needed for use put in an earthen dish milk enough to half cover them, a spoonful of butter, and one of sugar; cover tight, and let them simmer. Smooth a teaspoonful of corn-starch or of wheat flour in a little milk, and stir it in; serve as soon as the bread is well softened without breaking."

"They are both nice for variety, and serve as a good way to keep bread-crusts and scraps from wasting. You can do crackers the same way as that Breakfast Bread."

"One good turn deserves another," I said. "I will write in your note-book my recipe for—

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"*Mock Macaroni.*—Take broken crackers of any kind; crumb them up rather fine, and stir into them sweet milk, a little butter, pepper, salt and two tablespoonfuls of grated cheese. Have enough milk to bake them for three-quarters of an hour; let them be a light brown on top."

"Apropos of the grated cheese," said Miriam, "last evening Mrs. Black walked into my house, and hunted me up in the dining-room—a liberty which she allows herself. For my part I prefer that my dearest friend should knock. She looked at the table. 'What! pine-apple cheese! I cannot afford that for my family these times.' 'No,' I said, 'it is common cheese grated.'

"She looked curiously at me. 'Why did you say that? Now I would have let it pass for pine-apple.' I replied, 'Mrs. Black, economy is honorable, and I am not ashamed of practising it. I should be ashamed of any extravagance. If I did not need, as I do, to economize for myself, I should feel it a duty to do so for the sake of others who are in straits.'"

Miriam and I went down-stairs. I remarked: "Your work basket looks like a rainbow."

"Another bit of economy: all my neck-ties are getting made into the latest styles. This cream silk washes as well as muslin; so, washed and ironed, it is getting a frill of nice lace around the ends, and appearing in a new character. I think this black one will be lovely."

She had made the scarf-tie into a bow, button-holed the edges with rose-colored silk, and embroidered a pair of rose-buds in each of the ends. A pink silk tie had also taken the form of a knot, and she had transferred some elegant embroidery on the ends. I should have thought it had just cost two dollars.

"Mark Rogers will never be poor with you for a wife, Miriam." I said. "He got a fortune in the wife who said she had no capital. Yours, my dear, is perpetual capital."

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I engaged Miriam to come to tea next day, and then intended to go home, but Mrs. Smalley called me in. She was complaining as usual—a woman with many good points, but who does not know how to manage, and is chronically indignant because her sister is richer than she is. Well, I went in. She said:

"I tapped for you, Miss Sophronia, because I never make a stranger of you, and you usually manage to give me some advice when we are in a tight place—as me and Mary most generally are. I *do* feel vexed about Mary. She's as nice a girl, and as pretty a girl, if I do say it, as her cousins, and it is hard that they have everything they want, and she gets nothing."

"Pshaw, ma," said Mary.

"*It's so,*" said her mother. "Now Smalley has just said he can't afford for us to have the dressmaker here this fall, and we must do our own sewing. 'Twon't be such a heavy job, for Smalley is so short of cash we'll get precious little to sew on—and there's Sara's girls all out in bran, span, new clothes."

"Pshaw, ma," said Mary, again.

"*It's so,*" retorted her mother; "and we get little enough time to sew. We've had no girl since last spring."

"But you are only three in the family, and of the three you two are grown women—perfectly well, also. I should think you would get the work done easily, having fully half of every day for sewing, or such quiet work."

"Well, we don't, somehow. I keep things neat as wax, any one will allow that; and nothing in the kitchen goes to waste: we make our own soap, and our own bread and yeast; and half this house is covered with rag carpets I made myself; and just see these rugs—a dozen of them in this house—Mary has braided out of strips of old woollen and flannel clothes."

"They are very pretty and useful." I said. "I see the braids

are made heavy, and are sewed together by the edges, either in round or oval shape."

"Yes; and I must say a girl that is that industrious ought to have as nice clothes as Sara's girls. But no—not she."

"Pshaw, ma!" reiterated Mary.

"*It's so,*" insisted her mother. "And now, Miss Sophronia, what would you do in our place? I want Mary to be nice. And she gets invited out with her cousins, and she won't go; because she says they have such a power of nice things, like other young girls, and she has none. Her best frock is all out of fashion; and she has no fancy aprons, no nice ties, nor spencers, nor jackets, nor pretty collars; and if I set out to buy them it would take a mint of money, and when Smalley says he can't—he can't. Why the money he has laid out for her hardly will buy one good dress, to say nothing of the other things; and what would you do if you were me?"

"It seems never to enter your mind, Mrs. Smalley," I said, "that you might possibly use what you have on hand."

"We never have anything on hand," said she. "We wear our things clear out, or outgrow 'em, and then they're done for."

"Mother never throws away things," said Mary, "and we have a whole trunk of bits of things, and a closet solid full of old worn-out, outgrown dresses and jackets. But they're none of them worth anything."

"You see, Mrs. Smalley," I said, "when you want something in recent fashions, you go and buy one new thing and have it made up. You never make over your clothes, or use the dresses of past years to remodel for this year. What I would do would be to keep that money for something else, and not buy Mary a new gown at all."

They both looked dismayed and astonished.

"If you'll promise to exactly follow my directions," I said,

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"I'll engage that you shall fit Mary out nicely with the money Mr. Smalley gave you; and what is more, you know I shall not talk about it."

"Trust you for that, Miss Sophronia," said Mrs. Smalley. "I says to Mary the other day: 'I dare say anything to Miss Sophronia, for it 'ud take the Resurrection Angel himself to bring out what's once been buried in her ears.'"

I said to Mary: "As for that closet of clothes, you know I saw it last winter, when I was here while your mother was sick."

"And I'll never forget your kindness if I live to be a thousand," interrupted Mrs. Smalley.

"So come, Mary," I said; "you and I will go up-stairs, and if you'll take my niece, Mrs. Rogers, into our partnership, I'll agree to teach you what shall be worth a fortune to you."

Mary and I went up-stairs. Mary said: "Do please show me how to be nice on a little money, so that mother will not fret so at the difference between me and my cousins."

I like Mary: she is a friendly, industrious girl. I remember once when I was ill she came to my house every day, insisting on being of some use, even to helping Martha. I thought I might not only relieve her of some present annoyance, but might give her a lesson of use for all her life. Mrs. Smalley is one of the kind of people who *save aimlessly;* opposed to wasting, she hoards, but her stores are practically wasted, because she puts them to no use. I wished to teach Mary to use what she had before purchasing more.

Mary opened the trunk of fragments, odds and ends of all kinds, collected during a score of years, and neatly rolled in bundles. I said to Mary: "Here is a parcel composed of silk and ribbon: those shall be your neck-ties."

"There is scarcely anything nice there," she replied.

"You must take them to Mrs. Rogers, and she will show you how, by the aid of a little embroidery silk, to create use and

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beauty out of these fragments. This little roll of embroidery and scraps of edging shall be a nice outfit of collars and cuffs and under-sleeves. Come and spend Friday with me, bringing these, half a yard of fine linen, and half a yard of fine lawn, and I will show you how by taste, a little knowledge of transfer work, and your neat sewing, you can provide yourself ten dollars' worth of pretty articles for less than a dollar. It is early in the season: let the matter of your dress go until you are encouraged by the wonders which you perform in other ways." I opened the closet. "Here is an out-grown dress of barred muslin. That shall make you two white aprons with ruffles; get it ripped and washed. And here is the pretty embroidered muslin you had when you were twelve."

"The nicest frock I ever had," sighed Mary.

"Rip it up: with the aid of edging and insertion from that bundle, you shall have a lovely fancy sacque to wear to evening companies."

Mary's face brightened up. "I believe we *can* make use of these old things, and I shall go right to work ripping and pressing."

When I went home I casually remarked to Martha that I had been at Mrs. Smalley's.

"I hope she was redd up, and fit to see you, ma'am."

"Oh, yes: but really, Martha, I cannot see why Mrs. Smalley's work occupies all her. time; she and Mary are neat, good workers, and have only Mr. Smalley to work for in that six-roomed house."

"Dear knows, ma'am," said Martha; "Mrs. Smalley is busy enough, if that is all; she is one of those folks who would stand and jump in a bucket all day, and then wonder why they didn't get on far, when they kept agoing all the time." With which parable Martha left me to my meditations.

Miriam came early next day, and I told her about Mary

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Smalley, and asked her to invite the girl to spend a day or two with her, and then teach her how to make up the pretty articles of dress which she needed. "She will prove an apt pupil, and I wish you would show her what you have done for your own wardrobe: I know you are not ashamed of your contrivings in that line."

"Oh, by no means: quite proud, on the contrary!"

"And then, my dear, do let her stay all day, and help you get dinner and tea, and expound to her your 'order' and your method of *getting work done*. It may go far to making a happy woman of her, and her future home a place of content and not of worry. You, Miriam, have a real genius for housekeeping, and you should in this way let your light shine on your young neighbor: it will perhaps influence all her life."

"Certainly: I shall be glad to have her, and help her; I will write a note now, and let Ann take it to her."

So Miriam wrote her note, and then began to tell me of a "Mother's Meeting" which had been started. Some of our ladies meet with poor women who are now in unusual straits from lack of work; they give them materials to make up clothing, or sell them at wholesale prices what they themselves have purchased at such prices; or even lower, things which, having funds in hand, they have bought at auction sales. They encourage the women to bring clothing for their families to be remodelled or mended; and spend the time of sewing in discussing domestic affairs, in exchanging recipes, in giving information about domestic economy, and rules for keeping houses healthy, and making cooked food yield its full value to the consumer. "Cousin Ann is President," she added.

"That is a great charity," I said, "and very kind in you to take part in it."

"Indeed, aunt," she replied, "I begin to think charity pays: I am sure I have learned in those meetings a great deal that has

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saved me as much money as I have contributed to them. Besides, the ladies are showing these women how to repair clothes, foot stockings, and do various things, which I had never thought of, and I can make my charity-work go twice as far by knowing these methods."

Presently Helen and Mrs. Winton came, and the talk soon turned, as I meant it should, on domestic economy. Mrs. Winton has lived much abroad, and has thus had an opportunity of observing the home life of many peoples. She talks fluently if she perceives that her hearers are being interested and benefited. I presently led her to my subject. She said: "We Americans are an extravagant people: our land is so wide for its population, and brings forth, or can bring forth, so much more than its inhabitants consume, that we know nothing of the saving and careful economy of people of the Old World's thronged States. Lavish abundance of common things surrounded our ancestors, and they used it lavishly: we inherited the prodigal habit: but now our cities and some of our districts have a crowded population, and want is the result of waste. With us a poor laborer's family will spend more and waste more than a family in middle station in Italy, Germany or France; our middle classes spend and waste what would appall a Frenchman of fortune; in fact, we seem to lack the very means and methods of saving, which are open to all in the Old World; we despise saving; we call careful economy penuriousness; a woman who looks well to the ways of her household here is styled 'stingy:' abroad she is a good housekeeper doing her legitimate duty. Take our way of making coffee: a large quantity of ground coffee is mixed up with an egg or half an egg, as the case may be, and this is emptied into a coffee-pot of boiling water, and very possibly it is allowed to go on boiling, pouring steam out of the spout. The size of the pot has very little reference to the number of the family; after breakfast from a pint to three pints of coffee

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remain over: it may be thrown out, or it may be boiled over next morning. Abroad, the French pot rules the day: it is a pot made with two stories of about equal size. The lower one must hold as many cups as the family are likely to use. The upper story has two fine filters. The ground coffee, about half as much as needed for the other style of making, is put in the upper and coarser filter, and slowly over it is poured water sufficient to nearly fill the lower pot, when it shall have worked its way through the second fine filter. No egg, no mixing of any kind is used. The spout and the top have air-tight caps: the coffee is thus hermetically sealed up, and is set back on the stove where it shall keep scalding hot, but in nowise boil. In ten minutes the coffee is all in the lower pot, with every particle of strength from the grounds carried with it, and all its aroma held in itself, and not diffused through the house. Not a particle of grounds reaches the lower pot: you take the cap from the spout, and a clear bright stream of coffee goes into your cup. Boil those grounds afterwards, and there is no color or strength to be found in them. *All* the coffee is used each day: there is none to throw away, and French pots do not take kindly to the iniquity of coffee boiled over."

"But," said Helen, "suppose an unexpected guest is at table."

"Your Frenchman meets the difficulty by letting some member of the family quietly go without, or what is better, filling up the grown people's cups, and then pouring a little more boiling water in the pot, and giving the juveniles weaker drink; or he makes his original pot of coffee proportionately stronger, and pours a little boiling water into each cup; he will manage some way, rather than have coffee to throw out. The foreign housewife does not think it *mean* to count heads, and then count her potatoes and eggs. She knows whether her family takes one or two apiece of each, and she cooks accordingly; she is wise to leave a proper margin of one or two in case of somebody's extra

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appetite. She does not feel embarrassed, if her son calls for a third egg, calmly to remark that there are no more cooked; and she knows that with his proper quota of eggs and other food, he can complete his meal on bread and butter: she would feel much more embarrassed at having food to throw away."

"And then," said Miriam, "suppose some one's appetite fails, or does not increase to that 'margin of one or two'?"

"Suppose that one egg is left, or one potato. Here, Bridget, or the housewife herself, says, 'one is not worth keeping,' and throws them into the swill-tub. The French housewife is not tempted by that unhappy institution always yawning at hand. On the contrary, suppose the egg is soft-boiled. She drops it into a tin-cup, and makes it hard-boiled at once. One hard-boiled egg chopped fine is what she needs in composing a salad, and the French housekeeper is wise in behalf of health, of good taste, and of the beauty and variety of her table, to have salads innumerable—as many kinds of salads as Bottom had of wigs. There is the egg—the salad shall grace the tea-table. Or, there is the one potato. Your French housewife knows the value of soup; she does not make a huge soup, and expect her family to dine upon it; she does not have her soup always of one kind—she varies the kind; and she has a small dish of soup as a prelude to her dinner: here she serves health and variety. The potato nicely cut in wedges shall be one of the ingredients of her soup. The beginning of her soup is generally of bones. She has a stone jar, and the bones are usually trimmed closely out of the uncooked meat, sprinkled with salt and pepper, and put in this jar, over which a cloth is tied, and it is kept in a very cool place. Almost every day, with a few bones and a variety as to other ingredients, she will concoct a wonderful soup—a white soup, a brown soup, a clear soup, a vegetable soup—and the spoonful of beans or peas, the few slices of tomato, the remnant of the rice or the macaroni, shall not be ignominiously cast out,

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OUR OWN FIRESIDE.

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but the soup shall be as is most convenient to the stock on hand, and all these fragments, neatly kept, are to go therein. The French are not remarkably religious, but they do follow the monition: 'gather up the fragments that nothing be lost.' In one of *our* families, suppose that we have a cup of milk left from breakfast; in our closet is a slice or two of sponge or cup cake, a small saucer of jelly or preserve. In the American household, the milk is frequently thrown out, or one of the children is bidden to 'drink it up.' Biddy adds the preserve or jelly to her own breakfast, 'so she can have the saucer to wash.' The cake is given the children as an interlude to meals, to spoil their appetites. Lo, the foreign housewife! The cup of milk with an egg, a little flavoring and a trifle of thickening turns to custard; the cake is cut in thin pieces, spread with the conserve, and laid in a white pudding-dish; the custard is poured over it; it goes for ten minutes into the oven; the white of another egg is, with a little sugar, converted into a *meringue*, and spread on top; now the yolk of the second egg is beaten with a little cream or milk, and sugar and spice, into a sauce, or instead of the cream, a little home-made wine, or the juice left from some canned fruit is used: and here is a sauce for the dessert. We eat it. Delicious! What dainty extravagant things these foreign people use! Instead, we Americans would have thrown away the chief part of this dish, and would have provided for dessert a huge pie, more costly, and not half so wholesome."

"You mentioned being freed from the yawning of the refuse-pail," I said. "How is that?"

"There is very little to put in it. The foreign economist has nearly all her vegetables *scraped*, and not peeled—the thick parings taking away a fourth of the food; she remembers, perhaps, that the most nourishing and richest part of the food lies close to the skin, or she has simply been taught that she cannot afford to pare it. An old potato, a yam, a carrot, even a

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turnip and a summer squash, *can* be scraped, if Biddy thinks so and will take the trouble. Often, also, vegetables are cooked in their skins, and then the skin is pulled off with a knife and fork before serving: this saves the waste of the phosphates and starch in the boiling water. If peeling must be done, the knife is sharp and the peel is very thin. The housewife's eyes are over all her household; the cook cannot throw out and waste undiscovered. Madame has studied her subject: she knows how long the vegetables, the meat, and the condiments should last, and they are made to reach that requirement. A very small vessel will hold the waste, and if in the country it is at once turned to further use. The foreigner cultivates the unwholesome pig far less than we do: he prefers chickens. The housewife, when she has fowls, has the parings and scraps put on the fire in some vessel kept for the purpose; she stirs in a handful of meal, and a little pepper, and serves her fowls a hot breakfast, to be repaid in more and better eggs, and less cost in feeding.

"In foreign countries the shops expect to sell in littles: a penny's worth of this, and two-pence worth of that. Exactly what is needed for use is bought, and there is *nothing to be wasted.* So many people live in 'flats' or in lodgings, and have little or no cellar and closet-room, that they must buy as they use; and the shopman does not despise selling in littles: half his sales are made in that way.

"In the matter of fuel, we Americans are terribly wasteful. Wood and coal have been dangerously cheap to us. I feel heart-sick when I travel and see grand trees sacrificed for waste in fuel, and mighty trunks and branches rotting on the ground. Along some of our telegraph lines, you will see lying below each pole one or two other poles, moulding and rotting on the ground, waiting for the possible ruin of the standing post, and often that post is cedar, and will continue to stand until the

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waiting poles on the ground have rotted into uselessness. They call this forethought. It is a fool's waste. A shed here and there along the line, with a pole or two laid on trestles, and so kept sound and fit for use, would be thrift. I have travelled in Southern Jersey, along swamps and barrens which would have been an Italian's fortune in fuel. In Jersey it rots on the ground, or is burned over 'to get it out of the way;' and, maybe, in the burning the woods catch fire, and a thousand dollars worth of good timber is sacrificed. In Italy every particle of vegetation that will burn is used for fuel. Trunks and large limbs go for cord-wood; all the small branches are trimmed up, and sold by the load by themselves; the twigs and slender bits are gathered by children, sorted into bundles for kindling or for making a light blaze, are tied up with a vine or withe, and are considered *worth* saving and selling, when these little *fascine* go to you from the shop at two or three for a cent. The big dead weeds, the mullen and thistle-stalks, the brambles, are cut down, raked together, packed solidly on a cart and carried into the city, and sold to the bakers for heating their ovens. The stumps of old olive trees, the roots of dead olives and vines, the prunings of the vine and olive roots are gathered up, reduced in a mill to a kind of coarse sawdust, pressed into flat cakes to weigh half a pound each, called *fumes* or smokers, and are sold two or three for a cent, to keep a fire which you wish to leave very low without having it go out. From the pine woods on the hills the cones are gathered; their resinous wealth does not rot on the ground as here; but they come by wagon-loads as kindling, and sell five for a cent, or so much the bushel or hundred, as you choose to buy them—great cones, four or five inches in circumference, from the dark, poetic heights of Valombrosa. Children and aged people, who here would be paupers or quarrelling on door-steps, in Italy pick up a spare but honest living gathering *fascine*, or making the vine prunings

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into fagots and selling them through the streets. A rich Italian would turn pale at our paupers' waste of wood."

"And how," asked Miriam, "have these foreigners learned so much better economy than we?"

Mrs. Winton replied: "Trouble and sorrow bring always in one way or another their compensations. This economy, whereby these kingdoms are surviving wars and despotisms, and are rehabilitating themselves, bearing fruit in their old age, renewing themselves into youth, is the outcome of long ago schooling in tribulation. They have been scourged by famines, by plagues, by ravaging armies, by shameless taxations, and they have been *forced* since their earliest times to save every particle that could be turned to any use, to economize with the strictest methods. Now famines have fled before the face of civilization, governments have grown less oppressive, plenty smiles where want was known, and the good habits learned in ages of penury will make these nations rich and strong. America must learn this lesson of economy, for the noblest land cannot endure the drain of waste. If people could only be taught that economy is a thing of *littles* and of *individuals*, and of *every day*, and not a thing of masses and of spasmodic efforts, then a true idea would begin to tell upon the habits of our domestic life, and its effects would be seen in general and national prosperity, for the thrift and thriving of the individual is the thrift and thriving of the nation."

"I should think, at this rate," said Helen, "that the foreign housewife's existence would be a perfect slavery: she must be forever on the watch, sacrificing her time and strength for small, poor savings."

"In this, as in all our lives," said Mrs. Winton, "order is everything: system is the grand time and strength saver. The housewife inculcates upon children and servants the habit of saving; she notes every deficiency; she has her rules, and her

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order of using and saving. When she goes through her household, if hers happens to be the duty of superintendence rather than of execution, she notes all that is on hand, and orders it to its proper uses; she descries and checks every waste. It takes no more time nor strength to attend to this thoroughly than to go negligently over the house, chafing at wastes and deficiencies which she has neither energy nor wisdom to correct."

"Many things that might be kept to be useful," said Miriam, "spoil, mould, or grow stale in a temperature a little too warm: what is a good method of preserving such things, especially if, saving everywhere, one must save also on the ice bill, and buy very little ice, or even none?"

"Our foreign economist," said Mrs. Winton, "knows the value of three things: charcoal, evaporation, and a piece of muslin. A bit of thin muslin tied over pots and jars, instead of putting on them a close cover, will keep out flies and dust, and will admit air to aid in preserving things. For mould, every little fragment of it should be quickly removed, and jars or cans where it has been should be scalded and scoured, for mould is a vegetable growth, every particle producing spores, whereby, as by seeds, it reproduces itself. Charcoal kept near meats or other food absorbs into itself the germs of decay, and aids in preserving what is placed upon or beside it. Evaporation aids like ice in lowering the temperature. That stone jar for the bones, for instance, is to be kept cool. Tie a bit of muslin over it, pin a towel or thick cloth around it, and keep that wet—the evaporation will reduce the temperature: so by a wet cloth you can keep your butter jar in order, or a stone pot wherein you are keeping a piece of cooked meat."

"All this is very nice to know," said Helen, "and is also reasonable; but to put it in practice seems penurious, a fretting about trifles, a saving rather beneath people."

"That is because we do not look at it in a right light," said

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Mrs. Winton. "Christ, the Lord of all, who could command food for thousands at a word, did not think it beneath him to set his apostles to gathering up scraps of fish and bread, which he had produced at so little apparent effort and cost. He showed his *power* in providing, his *liberality* in bestowing, his *carefulness* in saving. 'Did he not this altogether for our sakes?'—to give us a lesson of that economy without which the human race cannot be maintained? All that is—the bread on your table, the meat, the egg, whatever we use—is the ultimate product of Christ's creating skill, and the result to us of his benevolence. What divine chemistry in the fruit matured for our tables! Economy is a high Christian duty, that nothing be lost."

Housekeepers in the country are able to avoid waste in keeping things far better than city housekeepers can do. There is usually the spring-house with its running water; and with the freer air and the shade trees, closets and store-rooms can be kept cool and sweet. I was talking with Cousin Ann about this: she says that many housekeepers do not realize the need of keeping the butter and milk in a place where there is no smell of cooked meats, or of vegetables or pickles. Some people will set a plate of pickles down by a pan of milk, or a dish of ham or mashed turnip warm from the table close by their fresh butter, and then wonder *why* their milk and butter taint so fast! Other people do not give air enough to places where they are keeping things, and they let in too much light, and are not careful to keep out flies. Cousin Ann has mosquito-netting nailed over the lower halves of her pantry and store-room windows, and she had the boys make latticed shutters for the windows, which shutters she keeps bowed all day: thus she has no flies in these places, and plenty of air. She now has wire covers to put over meat and vegetables set by from the table; but before she could afford these covers she put such things in deep basins of cheap

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red earthenware, and carefully tied pieces of netting over the tops. She remarked to me the other day that some people did themselves more damage with their ice-chests than going without ice would do them, for they crowded all manner of things into them, and were not careful to cleanse them thoroughly of all bits of food that might be scattered from the dishes. For people who cannot buy a refrigerator a nice ice-box can be thus made: take a common store-box as large as you want your ice-chest; get another box about two inches larger each way; sprinkle a layer of sawdust in the larger box; bore three small auger-holes in the bottom of the smaller box, and set it in the other, upon the sawdust; pack the space between the boxes with sawdust to within two inches of the top; drive small strips of board over the top of the sawdust to prevent its scattering out; bore in this outer box three small auger-holes low down, one in the side, and one in each end. Take a lid that will fit the inner box: nail stout cloth on it rather loosely, so that it can be filled in with sawdust before the last end is tacked down; put a handle, made of a strap of leather, in the centre; now if your cellar has rats in it, set into the ground four bits of old stove-pipe as pegs for the chest to rest upon, and if this is kept properly cleaned you have a good ice-chest, which will preserve ice far longer than many patent and expensive refrigerators.

I think if any one could give instructions in domestic economy it would be Cousin Ann: not a thing is wasted at her house; not a board or bit of wood as big as your hand left to rot—all put under shelter for fuel; every scrap of waste grease goes for making hard and soft soap; a leach of wood ashes is always in use; old bones do not lie around, unsightly litter, but there is a "bone heap," which is burned every year; no weeds overgrow the vegetable garden: Cousin Ann starts, in house-boxes, lettuce, radishes, onions and cucumbers;

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she has the earliest vegetables that are raised around here, and she says the truest economy in saving health, escaping bills for medicine, and even in saving in provisions, is attained by having plenty of fresh early vegetables on the table three times a day. Cousin Ann is well-to-do, but she says "prosperity came by economy, and she will not deride the bridge which carried her safely over perilous places:" she says economize in little things, and great economies will take care of themselves. Cousin Ann always has in each room where there is a fire a box of paper-lighters to save matches; her bread-board and pan have no dough left clinging to them; there is no scattering around her flour-barrel, and all the scrapings of pots and plates go to the chicks.

"These are such trifles, Cousin Ann."

"Well, your life is made up of seconds," replies Cousin Ann in a parable.

"Very valuable trifles, after all; have you no more of the kind, Cousin Ann?"

"Perhaps I have not mentioned to you *two bottles* in my china-closet which I value very highly. One is a large-necked bottle of plaster of Paris. It costs me ten cents to fill it, and ten dollars would be a very small estimate of what that amount saves me. If the walls, especially the hard-finished ones, get scratched or nicked in ugly little holes, I mix a little plaster of Paris with water and cover the injury: all is then as good as new; for doing this work I keep by the bottle a thin, handless knife-blade. If any crockery is broken, I mix some of this plaster with a little strong glue or with some white of egg, fasten the broken parts together, hold or tie them in place for a few minutes, then they are dry and I scrape off the plaster which has exuded from the crack, and the dish is firmly mended. China, glass and earthenware can be used in this way. If the dishes do not look well enough to come to the table, they will yet do to set away

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things in the store-closet, or for keeping jelly, marmalade, or preserves. For mending such things I keep an especial glue-brush; one must work quickly as the plaster dries so quickly; the knife and brush used in it are fit for nothing else; and I mix the plaster as I need it in a clam-shell, always keeping two or three clam or muscle-shells besides the bottle: the bottle must be kept corked. Speaking of clam and muscle-shells: they are ten times as good as knives or spoons to scrape out pans or pots: some folks spoil table-ware, and waste time, when using a shell would be greatly better in all regards. When my lamp-tops come loose I don't send them to town: I mend them with plaster of Paris. The other bottle I mentioned is for *Ammonia:* I get that at twenty-five cents a quart at a wholesale house in the city. Nothing is like it for cleaning looking-glasses, windows, silver or paint, for washing lace or embroidery, for cleaning black silk or cloth, for washing your best glass, for sprinkling in soap-suds over your house-plants once a week. Keep the bottle corked; mix a little ammonia in warm water as you need to use it, making the water stronger of ammonia for glass and silver, weaker for flowers or paint or clothes. We always clean our combs and brushes well with it about once a month: it keeps them white and stiff; and mixing a little ammonia with a teaspoonful of bay-rum and half a pint of warm water we use it for cleaning our heads: it frees the head from dandruff, and the hair from dust, and helps the growth. I don't know of anything nicer in a bath, when one is very warm, has been perspiring freely, or engaged in hard, dirty work; add a little ammonia to the bath-water, and you feel clean, fresh, and rested; indeed the ammonia pays for itself a hundred times over. In house-cleaning times it saves soap, brushes and paint, and time in washing wood-work or windows; it is a grand thing for carpets: if they look faded and soiled, sweep them well; then after the dust has settled wipe them with a dry flannel;

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then put some ammonia, say a dessertspoonful, in two quarts of warm water: wring out a clean flannel cloth in it and wipe the carpet all over, wringing the cloth out in the ammonia water several times. I believe it destroys moths, worms, and carpet-bugs, and sets the color, besides taking off all grease and stains. So, Sophronia, *I* wouldn't keep house without my plaster bottle and my ammonia bottle."

"Well, Cousin Ann," I replied, "I shall give my nieces each two of these famous bottles, with their virtues and uses inscribed on the outside."

"Do," said Cousin Ann: "it will be better to them in the long run than a silk dress."

"Yes," I replied, "the dress would soon be spoiled, and might encourage extravagance or love of display, but this gift will help them to attain that virtue of life-long benefit, Economy in the Home."

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CHAPTER IV.

CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY.

WHAT AUNT SOPHRONIA HAS TO SAY OF THEIR RIGHTS AND LIABILITIES.

I HAVE always had the deepest interest in children, and a strong affection for them. They are the very centre of the Home; in fact, a Home without children hardly seems to me a Home at all; and yet, these, who are designed to be the Home's choicest blessing, often become its heaviest sorrow. I think people have more varieties in their fashions of dealing with or bringing up children, than in anything else; and I suppose there should be differences in methods, inasmuch as there are so great natural differences in children. But, after all, there seem to be certain fundamental rules, which apply to the right training of all children: these rules I find entirely ignored by very many parents.

Children, as human beings, must come into the world with certain inalienable rights. A great many parents seem to regard their children as mere chattels, without any rights whatever. Children, as sharing our fallen nature, need certain restraints. Many parents seem to forget this, and let them come up in entire ignorance or defiance of that excellent thing —law. Children are the noblest of our possessions. They are the only immortal part of our possessions. They deserve, therefore, in virtue of their intrinsic value, our most vigilant care and guidance. But many parents will bestow more training on a young colt or heifer than on their child; more care on a sewing

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machine than on son or daughter; more time on a piano than on their own offspring; more affection on some pet cat, bird or poodle than they *exhibit* for a child. They will try harder to understand the eccentricities of a cooking-stove, than to understand the human mind, which God has committed to their keeping. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Thoughts on the rights, needs and duties of children in the home, have pressed upon me more forcibly than ever since there are children in Helen's and Miriam's homes.

I find that people's grandest mistakes and most unutterable failures are connected with the training of their children. Thus it has been in all time, and even in the families of holy people. Isaac seems to have had his hands more than full with son Esau; and Jacob found plenty of trouble among his thirteen. David's sons turned out sadly, some of them. It is no wonder that Ishmael went out of the ways of Abraham so quickly, when Abraham turned him adrift so early; and while Lot's children seem to have been a desperate set, Mrs. Lot was most likely to blame for that, especially with Lot's going to live in a wicked place like Sodom just for gain, which no father of a family should have done. It appears to me that when there is failure, we can usually go back and put our finger on some error and say: "Here is where the wrong began." But then it is always easier to see the beginning from the end, than the end from the beginning. We know well enough roads that we have travelled over! Then when the evil is done, it is often too late to mend it. How circumspectly then we should go over unknown ground, where a false step may be fatal!

I remember Mrs. Winton and I went to see Helen when little Tom was a fortnight old. Helen seemed to have some sense of her responsibility, and she said: "What a charge I shall have when it is time to begin to train and educate this child!"

Mrs. Winton looked up: "Helen, you should have begun to

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train and to educate a fortnight ago. Education should begin with the first hour of a babe's life, and it should from that hour have a fixed end."

"I don't understand you," said Helen.

"The end of our education should be to develop the child in every direction, into the very best and highest which it is capable of attaining. We must always remember that the child will live forever in another world than this; that in this world it will be a member of a social system, and will have duties to its race. It is also an *individual*, with its private and particular nature and emotions, which are to be regarded in its up-bringing. So, Helen, begin at once to train your babe: as an individual, with regard to its rights; and as a member of society, with regard to its duties."

"But, Mrs. Winton, what can one teach so young a child?"

"Patience is the child's earliest lesson. It can be taught to *wait*. Don't give it what it is crying for while it cries. Calm it tenderly first, and then promptly give the food or the toy; as it grows older, whatever it is proper for it to have: it soon associates receiving with quiet and pleasant asking. So you can teach the child, as a member of society, to cry softly, and not disturb the house with wild shrieks. You can calm and soothe a very young child to mild crying, and get it habituated not to roar and bellow."

"I always noticed, Mrs. Winton," I said, "that your children cried quietly, and did not fill the neighborhood with shrieks."

"I always pitied them when they were hurt, not in the ratio of the noise they made, as many do, but in the ratio of their gentleness about their trouble. Children love sympathy, to be petted and pitied—if shrieking like Comanches is the price of notice, of course they will shriek. I used to say 'softly, softly, and then I shall feel so sorry for you. Ah! what a good child to be so patient!' They learned a pride in patience and endur-

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ance. I have seen mothers feeding a child with two spoons, nurse and mother feeding together, to keep the child from screaming as soon as its mouth was empty. The thing is a fact, and ruined the child's temper and digestion. A child should be taught to wait patiently while its food is preparing, and while itself is being made ready to eat it. Naturally, the little one is the centre of its own universe, and believes the world was made when it was, and for it. We must early teach the child, in patience,, gentleness and generosity, to know that it has compeers whose rights are as settled as its own."

Mrs. Burr also called upon Helen with me while Tom was a young infant. Helen said to her:

"Mrs. Burr, your family is considered a model: give me some of your rules for training little children."

"I esteem *quiet* very highly," said Mrs. Burr, "both in behalf of the child's health and its good manners. A little child is a delicate organization, and its nerves are delicately strung; but nurses frequently jounce, toss and tumble it, tickle it, jump and scream at it, and take its nervous contortions or forced laughter for expressions of pleasure. Do we see cats or birds serving their young in this way? No, they supply their needs, keep them warm and quiet, and let them develop their faculties naturally. Grown people could not endure the torments through which they put a young child, calling it 'amusing it.' I have known children given spasms, or fixed in nervous diseases, by this folly. Nurses are especially given to this error. They are often of a hoydenish, noisy class, and they use these manners to a child. If physically the child escapes harm, its manners are injured; it is rampant, boorish, disturbing every one with its uproar, which is called liveliness and healthfulness by the parent, yet is really a bad habit. Children disturb their elders more by their noise than in any other one way, yet parents deliberately train up their children in a noisiness, which they cannot

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endure, and as a next step drive them out into the street in order to be rid of their uproar."

"But, Mrs. Burr, I have supposed that noise was natural to children, and that only feeble children were very still."

"The noise of children," said Mrs. Burr, "has its proper limitations of time, place and kind. *Ugly* noises they should be trained to eschew; the happy noise of their plays, shouts and laughter are natural and healthful, but even they must not be brought among the aged, the sick, nervous, or where a young child is sleeping. Children can be taught to keep their boisterousness for their own play-room, the field or the garden; to speak in gentle tones, to choose quiet plays when they play around their elders. It is easy, Helen, to begin right in these matters, and it insures a happy home; it is hard to begin later, when two or three children have become fixed in unpleasant ways; it is dangerous to family peace and juvenile manners not to begin at all. And let me say a word on the subject of nurses. Our children are often permanently injured mentally or physically by their nurse. The nurse *may* have a loving disposition, and may grow to have a fondness for her charge, but it is idle to expect from her a warm affection for every child whom she is hired to attend. Your safeguard then is in good principles; but how many of those who aspire to the very responsible office of child's maid, are trained in good principles? It frequently happens that the child of well-to-do parents, able to hire a nurse, gets poorer care, and has less chance of its life, than the child of poor parents. The fearful summer mortality among poor children can be accounted for in close, hot rooms, impure air, dirty clothes, bad food, and often general neglect. The richer child has good food, air, room, clothes, cleanliness, but he has a nurse-maid, whose hidden carelessness often forfeits the life of her charge. How often have I seen a delicate babe sent out by its mother for an airing in its carriage! The nurse, chatting with her

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friends, or hastening to overtake a companion, dashes the little buggy over curbs and crossings. I have *even seen* a child flung bodily out of its carriage by such a jolt. In our parks I have seen maids rushing the little buggies down slopes, over drains, around curves, in a manner to endanger the spines and brains of infants. Or the nurse sits down on a door or a church step for a long talk: the babe, exposed to heat and flies, often the sun blazing on its undefended face, begins to wail. Hundreds of times have I seen the nurse shake or slap it for its cries. After an hour or two of such a 'ride for health,' the child goes home fevered, weak—no appetite. Dozens of cases of illness or of deaths, which parents and doctors ascribe to 'summer heats,' or the 'diseases incident to summer,' are the result of exposures and excitements which grown people could not endure. The lovely babe of a friend of mine died after agonizing illness—the victim of a nurse who was very fond of it. After a hot day she sat with the child on a porch during a thunderstorm, giving the babe no protection for its bare neck and arms, until it was chilled through. Many nurses privately administer opiates to their charges. Almost all nurses that I ever knew do not hesitate to frighten children by noises or tales; or, to keep them from being venturesome, teach them fears of almost every place and thing. The mother, who wants a brave son, begins by handing him over to a nurse, who, for the first three years of his life, labors to make him a coward."

"You alarm me, Mrs. Burr," said Helen; "but what is to be done?—ought not nurses to be hired?"

"I think," said our friend, "that mothers often injure themselves and their babes by endeavoring to assume the whole care of the child. The mother begins the charge in a weak state of health; she is burdened with family cares, possibly with sickness in the house, with broken rest at nights; she is feeble and nervous, and this nervousness reacts upon the child, while often

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OBEDIENCE IS THE FIRST LESSON.

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a mother's health is shattered and she dies prematurely, leaving her babes to strangers, when by sharing the care of them her life might have been prolonged. So, and in an even greater degree, the figures and health and tempers of unfortunate little eldest daughters are sacrificed to being made *reliable child's maids* for their juniors. There is hardly a being on earth whom I pity more than such a little eldest girl, prematurely old and care worn, never knowing what a jolly childhood is, always with the children on her mind or in her arms. Better by far to dress this little girl in plain calico, and send her to church in a white sun-bonnet, while the money for fine dress pays a maid to carry and attend the little ones, than to have the poor creature in her own childhood burdened with a mother's cares, and compelled by her own grievances and privations to consider children an unmitigated nuisance. A lovely lady once said to me, 'I feel often horrified at the little love I have for my brothers and sisters—they are less to me than strangers; but it was my mother's error. Those children were the curse of my early life. I had no rights and no privileges, no toys which the little ones were not allowed to destroy. I could not have company, because "I had enough brothers and sisters," or "company disturbed the baby." I could not visit, because the children missed me, or should have been asked to go with me. If I went in the street I dragged a carriage or led or lugged a child. I spent the evenings until my own bed-time shivering in a cold room, waiting for some child who chose to be afraid to go to sleep. I never went anywhere with my mother, because when she was out I must be at home. I saved the lives of the little things a few times by my courage and presence of mind, and I almost regretted it, because the more reliable I was the more I was laden with a woman's duties. I remember when once or twice death came to our crowded circle, my first irresistible thought was—now I would get a little more time to rest and read. Even

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my school and lessons were sacrificed to these children. All this was pecuniarily unnecessary, but my parents felt that nurses were unreliable, and I, alas, was trusty! I often wished I had been born without a conscience, so that my parents would have been afraid to trust me, but I was so constituted that I could sacrifice life rather than duty. The memory of my youth is a nightmare. A pestilence broke up our family within a week. I sorrowed for my dead, but I was free from slavery. Now my remaining brothers and sisters are to me chiefly associated with the long weariness, sadness, sacrifice, and rebuffs of my early life. When I was twenty-four my own first child was laid in my arms, and there surged over me that feeling of burden and distress, that horror of great darkness, that closed my childhood in; but I soon found that a woman's joyous love, her knowledge, her skill, her strength for responsibility, her command of the situation, for her own babe, is a very different thing from the experience of a child so recklessly overburdened as I was.'"

"Dear Mrs. Burr," cried Helen, "if I ever have a little daughter, she shall have the advantage of that little story. But tell me what to do. I cannot, it seems, have a nurse, nor do without one: where is the middle course here?"

"If you can afford, by any sacrifices of luxuries or fineries even, to keep a nurse-maid, Helen, do so. But first be *sure* about the girl you are getting: know something of her family, her history; see to it that she is healthful, modest, cleanly, kind. You cannot be too scrupulously particular about these things. Then consider that you get her, *not* to take your place to the babe, but to relieve you in lesser cares, so that you can with better strength fulfil the rest. *A mother* should always bathe, dress, undress, and feed her own child: no one else will exercise such tender, wise care as she in these immensely important particulars. If your child, unhappily, must be fed from its birth, see yourself to the preparing of its food, and the

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washing, keeping and cleansing of the vessels in which that food is prepared and administered. If the nurse puts the child to sleep in the day time, let her do it in a room where you are sitting; but I should say, always put your own child to sleep, and let the nurse take any work that might at that time occupy you. At night put the child to bed yourself: then you will be sure that it is not frightened nor made uncomfortable. If possible, accustom the child to going to sleep itself when laid on the bed, and teach it to sleep without a light: a light burns up the oxygen of the room, depriving the child of good air, and its constant use makes the child timid in the dark. However, some children cannot be taught these things: nervous fear is constitutional. Remember, then, what Horace says: 'You cannot drive out nature with a fork.' Keep away the causes of nervous fear, and by degrees the child will outgrow it. That splendid child, Grace Winton, was from her birth constitutionally fearful of lightning; frantic terror took possession of her at the slightest flash. No matter where she was, nor how occupied, if an electric storm appeared, Mrs. Winton repaired to Grace, and she never allowed her to go far from her, or for a long time. Grace was ashamed of her uncontrollable fear; friends told Mrs. Winton that she spoiled the child in this point. She replied: 'No; I shall solace her unreasoning age, and trust to developed reason to control her.' She explained early to Grace the reason, uses and theories of storms; she showed utter fearlessness herself; and from the time she was eight, Grace lost her terrors, and is now as brave as her mother in all particulars. But to return to the nurse. She can hold, carry, exercise with the child, but do not let her go off alone on long perambulations with it. If she goes beyond your sidewalk or garden go with her; if you cannot go, keep her under your eye and out of temptation. The only time I ever broke that rule, my youngest nearly died from getting the whooping cough in the midst of

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his teething; the nurse was a trusty girl, too; she merely called on her sister, not knowing the cough was in her family; but if I had been with her she would have made no calls. Nurses, in their calls, expose children to foul air, vermin or diseases; and keep them warmly wrapped for hours in close rooms, and then go out in the cold with them. Often, in low parts of the city, have I seen babes crying in their buggies at doors where nurse-maids were inside gossiping, and once I knew of a child stolen under such conditions."

"But suppose, Mrs. Burr, I am too sick to feed or bathe the child, or to go out with it, or put it to bed?"

"Get a friend to go out with it, with the nurse, or keep it at home; and have the nurse feed, bathe and put it to bed where you are present to overlook the matter."

"But in some families nurses take the whole care of children, and often in England they bring up the children entirely."

"God sometimes mercifully confers on children, thus left by their mothers, a nurse more faithful than the mother. But I don't think we should indulge neglect, expecting Him to make up for our delinquencies. One may have a mature, judicious nurse many years, and trust her more and more as she shows herself reliable: yet, ought a mother to desire to delegate those duties and services which her little child has a *right* to claim from her? In England long terms of service are more common than here. Here a nurse is changed once a year, or half a dozen times a year; or as soon as her little charge can toddle she is dismissed. She loses the affection of habit, and does not expect to become identified with the family interests. In England a nurse spends often her whole life in one family, nursing two generations; the family feel that one who was devoted to their helpless infancy has more than a pounds-and-pence claim on them. In this respect the feeling of the colored nurses in the South, formerly, was like that of the English rather

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than the ordinary American nurse, and resulted in the safety of the nurseling."

I trust Helen profited by this talk of Mrs. Burr; but being naturally indolent, she left a good deal too much responsibility to her nurse-girl. However, the first one was a good nurse, for I engaged her myself; unfortunately she soon left.

Mrs. Burr's remarks about educating children into noisiness and timidity struck me, and doubtless caused me more particularly to notice several little street incidents. I walked out one day and saw our minister's wife at her garden gate talking to Cousin Ann's son Fred, who was in his wagon. She had in her arms her babe, a year old. The farmer's horse put his head over the gate: the child shrank back to his mother's neck.

"Pretty horse!" said his mother, in her musical voice; and taking the child's hand in her own she stroked the animal's face. "See his ears: see his nice eyes." Grown suddenly bold the child poked his finger at the horse's great dark eye, but the watchful mother seized his hand: "Softly! be kind to the horse. Poor horse. No, no; don't touch his eye."

The child's next move was to tap the beast's nose as hard as he could.

"Softly! gently; so, so; you must not whip the good horse; pat him so, softly."

The child learned now that there was to be neither fear nor abuse, and, crooning in a tender tone, he stroked the animal's face with his white dimpled hand. A square farther on I saw a young woman on the edge of the sidewalk buying vegetables from a cart. She had a child in her arms, and as the cart-horse turned his head to look, the little one reached out laughing. The horse's head was two or three feet from the child, but the mother howled: "O now! owh! he'll bite you!" in a voice to be heard a block off. The child burst into a shriek of terror, and was carried in-doors, having learned that a very common animal

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was an object of mad fear. Near my own home I saw a young woman with a two-years-old boy in her arms, as she stood talking to some friends who were in a buggy. The child had a willow switch with which he was striking about. The mother, a boisterous creature, shouted: "Whoa! get up! Hit the horsey! Hit him hard! That's right; crack him good! whoa!" The youngster bellowed as loudly as his progenitress, and hit right and left as well as he was able. He was getting his lesson: a lesson of noise, of cruelty to a domestic animal, of needless words, uproar and excited actions—he was in a fair way to become hard-hearted, and very uncomfortable to live with.

When Miriam's little Dora was a few months old, Miriam invited Mrs. Burr and myself to tea. Very naturally, our talk turned on the training of children, and Mrs. Burr made some good remarks on the subject. She said: "Miriam, don't expect your child to be perfect. That is our first demand on our children: we expect them to be angelic beyond others, yet, when we come to look at ourselves, we shall see how very insufficient a foundation we have for such an expectation. Don't feel that all faults are equally heinous. Childhood has errors which we may reprove or correct very gently, or even ignore altogether, rather than to be always condemning, trusting that the whole moral training of the child will correct some faults of which individual notice has not been taken. Childhood has its *crimes* which cannot be permitted without destroying the child's character. I should say the three primary crimes are *disobedience*, *falsehood*, and *selfishness*. Of the first, nothing so insures the happiness of the child, and the comfort of the Home, as obedience; obedience includes respect for *all* who are in authority; the respecting delegated as well as parental authority; true obedience has none of the blatant, 'I shan't mind you; you ain't my mother,' style, which some parents even think very amusing. If we begin early enough with a child, it will acquire the habit of obedience before

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it knows that it is learning anything, and it will grow into obedient dispositions, as the plant grows as you have trained it. Some parents command and re-command, and then permit the child to disregard the order; others are angry and upbraid or punish, without stopping to consider whether the child has understood the order. I have seen idiots who will tell a child a year old to put down or pick up something, and when the order is not obeyed, they begin to shake and slap, never questioning whether the new denizen of this world apprehends their instructions, or appreciates what it is to do. The child becomes terrified and nervous; that is set down as obstinacy, and 'a will that must be broken.' What did the Lord bestow the Divine Power of the will for, if not to be a stronghold to the human being? It must be guided in the way of righteousness. I have noticed Mrs. Winton: she never allows her word to be disregarded, and never has a battle. I have seen her tell a young child to put down something, which the child, looking at her, still clutched. There was no second order; she quietly unloosed the little fingers and the thing was put down. She said if the child did *not* understand the phrase 'put it down,' the act expounded it; if it *did*, and concluded to hold on, the loosing of its grasp secured the accomplishment of the parental demand, and taught it that instant action must follow an order. So when she bid a little one pick up something, as a bit of bread which it had thrown down, once told, if obedience did not follow, she quietly clasped the little fingers over the object and secured the performance of the act; her children have grown into an assurance that the mother's order must be followed by execution, while no bitter antagonisms have been awakened. One reason of her strength in government is that she never demands or asserts a thing concerning which she has not herself full assurance, and then she never changes: her words are like the laws of the Medes and Persians; and while law is thus inflexible,

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her children have their acknowledged rights, which are to them as impregnable as an Englishman's home. I notice, too, that while she does not stop to argue things with her children, she is always ready to explain, sometimes before, sometimes after, the performance of an order: thus her children's acts are established on reason, and sound judgment is developed in them while they are not forever saying, 'Why?' Obedience is the corner-stone in Home training. The child should not grow up feeling that obedience is due only to one parent: that authority resides only in one—that father must be minded, while mother can be twisted as they choose; that mother rules them, while father is a figure-head, or an animated purse. They must not find one parent concealing their acts from the other, or one parent permitting what the other prohibits."

I said: "While in our civil laws one kind of penalty meets one offence and another another, in domestic training there is too often only one kind of punishment for all misdoings: crimes or mere errors meet the same reward; a lie or an accident receives equal reprobation. This is the sure way to destroy moral sense."

"Accidents should never receive punishment," said Mrs. Burr, "but a child should be *always* required, as far as possible, to repair them: thus carelessness is corrected. True, the child's bungling repairing may all need to be done over again by the parent, but in giving its time and its labor, the child has learned carefulness. A nephew of mine was shamefully wasteful of his food; his mother preached good manners, his father general human needs, and depicted poor people hungering for his waste: he wasted still. When he was twelve years old, my brother reformed him thoroughly: he made him raise, one summer, a quarter of an acre of corn, and the same amount of potatoes. Ben planted and hoed, weeded and pursued potato-bugs; he thought it fun at first, work presently, purgatory soon after. His father had

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hired the half acre, paid for the seed and the ploughing poor Ben learned what it costs to produce food He dug his potatoes, cut and husked his corn, found a sale for both, repaid his father's outlay, and pocketed a dollar and a half for his summer's work; but he pocketed a lesson worth thousands. He knew how to raise his dinner out of the soil, and he knew what labor food represents; he is now the most scrupulously saving fellow I ever saw.

"The children of a friend of mine were remarkable for the purity and propriety of their language. She procured this niceness by an odd method. Children readily pick up vulgar or bad words; whenever she heard such an one, she calmly looked into the little mouth whence it came: 'Dear, dear, what a dirty mouth! Such a word does not leave a clean mouth! Come, let us wash it.' The mouth was carefully washed with soap and water, rinsed, wiped. 'Go, now, and be careful; don't get your mouth dirty any more.' No matter how busy she was, the great business of keeping clean mouths was always heeded, and her children learned a positive disgust for all low language and a hearty respect for cleanness of speech. My cousin Ann's mother had a custom akin to this. When her grandchildren dropped an evil word, she rubbed a little aloes on their tongue. A *bad* word was a *bitter* word to them, and they, also, talked as they ought. The same disease requires different remedies to suit the patient. I had my eldest at Cape May when he was three, and from a family of boys at our hotel, he learned to swear. Imagine my consternation! He picked up their speech as he did mine, knowing nothing of its meaning. The more I reproved and punished, the more firmly the evil language was fixed in his mind. I went home with him to escape bad company. I wept over the affair to my mother. She said to me: 'The child knows no more harm in those words than in a nursery rhyme. All your measures are fixing them

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in his memory; at home he hears nothing of the kind. Ignore his use of these words, and he will forget them in a fortnight.' I took her advice, and in a week the objectionable words had faded from his memory."

Our minister's wife has remarkable success in training her children. I was talking with her one day on the subject, and we happened to come upon the matter of truthfulness. She said:

"Nothing is more beautiful than truth, and we must first teach it to our children by our own example, by showing and inculcating inflexible principles of honor. Many parents make their children liars by a severity which first makes them cowards, and by a doubting of their words, and by a readiness to accept any stranger's word against the child's statement. This is an error as great as that of being credulous, an easy dupe, and falling a prey to any misstatement the child may make. Parents should study the character of their children to see whether they are honest or no, and what are the causes of dishonesty. Very vivid imagination in young children causes them to state things *as they appear to them*, which look like very false statements to grown people. We must consider how small the child is in comparison with his surroundings, how new the world is to him, and how little grounds he has for forming a judgment, before we call his misstatements lying. In early ages, knowing little of scientific fact, people attributed to witchcraft and the supernatural what are now the easily explained operations of nature; ignorance begot superstition; ignorance may make children appear false; we should be careful to instruct them, and to let no error of statement pass, so that we may obtain a noble clearness and truthfulness in them. A lying child is a mean and a dangerous child; and a parent's most vigilant and earnest efforts must be given to ensuring absolute truthfulness."

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Our minister preached a sermon to the young on TRUTHFULNESS. He does not often quote the old philosophers: he prefers to instruct from the Scripture, as getting there the best that can be given; but I noted a quotation or two which he made from Plato on Truth. "Is there anything more akin to wisdom than truth? Or can the same nature be a lover of truth and a lover of falsehood? The true lover of learning then must from his earliest youth, as far as in him lies, desire all truth." "God is perfectly simple and true, both in deed and word; he changes not; he deceives not, either by dream or by waking vision, by sign or word."

I think Miriam's children should grow up to be blessings to their parents and to society, for she and Mark both train as they desire the child to develop, and to be when it is mature. One evening I was there, and Mark brought home for the child some little treat. Dora, seated on her mother's lap, proceeded to help herself. Mark said:

"There is nothing more detestable, more cruel, more ruinous to society than selfishness. Don't begin now, Miriam; by letting Dora think only of her own satisfaction; teach her that nothing is truly blessed until it has been shared."

"That," said Miriam, "is Mark's rule for Dora, and I think it a very good one: always to offer to others a part of what she has. She seems naturally inclined to be selfish, but we want to teach her a habit of giving, and we always praise her when she divides with others. We go through the form of sharing with her on all occasions."

"Some parents," said Mark, "themselves divide the child's possessions; but that is not teaching the child to give; it is depriving it of the luxury of giving. Children should be taught spontaneity in giving. I have seen parents take forcibly the child's property and give it to others; that is merely to inculcate the right of might, and to give a lesson in robbery: a rightly

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constituted child would resent and question such a proceeding. If the child's giving to its mate must be final, so should the parent's gift to the child be final; and if it is to be given away, the child should be the free-giver. Yet children should be taught not to give, trade, or take without honoring its parental guide by asking advice. The parent, as judge, can condemn some ill-used possession as forfeit, or can adjudge the child to make restitution in kind for damage done to its neighbor's property; here the parent bases his decree on principles of common equity, and here is a grand and not to be slighted opportunity for teaching justice between man and man, human property rights, and the majesty of law, as guardian over all its subjects, and with eye fixed on the common good."

"Indeed, Mark," I said, "very few parents consider that boys should do justice and deal honorably by each other: I have seen over-reaching called 'smartness'—destruction 'playfulness.' A child loses his playfellow's toy and says he's sorry, but is not taught to give up his own property to replace the loss. And how frequently are children allowed to give and then take back!"

"There," replied Mark, "is the root of much dishonesty among men: they began it when they were boys, their parents ignoring it, or abetting it, or setting an example. Ingrain honesty in a lad, and you are sure of an honest man. Girls and boys should be allowed independent property dealings with each other; their parents remarking, and advising and carefully insisting on rigid honesty. Girls should not be taught that in virtue of their sex they may change their minds, break their promises, or deal fast and loose. Upright business principles are as good for girls as for boys, and they should learn them."

During these years my niece Hester has several times returned home for short visits, and I have seen with satisfaction

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Mrs. Winton's prophecies concerning her proving true. While no less decided, she is less aggressive: she is just as fond of argument as ever, but proceeds with it by question, rather than contradiction; she says this is the "Socratic method." Whatever method it is, I like it better than the one which she had formerly in use, though I will admit that this Socratic method is rather hard on her opponents in usually betraying them into contradicting themselves! Hester, having graduated, was still pursuing her favorite studies in New York, when she came to spend a few weeks with me, her father being absent. He accompanied an Exploring Expedition to South America. I don't appreciate John Rocheford's studies and explorations, simply because they are *selfish*. What is the use of heaping up knowledge if one does not intend to make any use of it? It seems to me very like a miser heaping up money, for its own sake, and not for what it will procure: it is merely a more refined kind of miserliness. It seems to me that we should put our knowledge, as well as our money, to use: keep it in circulation. I think when our dear Lord condemned hiding talents in the earth, he meant more than mere cash. That is a true scripture: "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." We ought, indeed, to use every little thing we have or know in some way to benefit the world; then in serving our fellows we serve our Lord. One would not be quite useless in the world, if one even knew and taught a better way of cooking a piece of meat. That is what I say to John; he heaps up knowledge, and knows no one will gather it—it will go into the grave with him.

Well, Hester came to visit me, and I had, among other things, opportunity to see how Hester applied her common sense and her education to the training of children. I have always said that if there was one foolish thing above another in training children, it was to allow them to stand and tease, tease forever about a thing, say "no" half a dozen times, and then give up,

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and say "yes" as a reward of merit for teasing. When a parent acts in that way, how much respect is a child likely to have for the parent's judgment and truthfulness? We should neither grant nor deny so hastily that we have not well considered a question. There is much which our children must be denied: therefore, when we can consent to their wishes, let us do it heartily and cheerfully. If we deny, let it be because we *must*, and then not go back on our principles by finally agreeing to what we think wrong. I remember once I was visiting Cousin Ann at the farm, and I was in the garden with Ann's sister-in-law, and this lady's little son Bob came up:

"Mother! can I go fishing?"

"Why, no, Bob; what do you want to fish for? you never catch anything, and you'll be sure and get cold."

"Why, I like to fish, and all the boys are going, and I never get cold; say, can't I go fishing?"

"No, child, I say; I'm sure you have not weeded the cabbages, and you've got your composition to write."

"Hoh! I wrote my composition last night: it's all done, and I finished the cabbages an hour ago—can't I go fishing?"

"Dear me, Bob, what a tease you are! no: it's too damp."

"Damp! oh, dear: then it'll never be dry; it hasn't rained for a week, and the dew's all gone, and it is such nice weather—can't I go fishing?—Dick's going!"

"Dick's going! Well, he'd stay home if his mother said so."

"But she lets him go—can't I go fishing, mother?"

"I *never* saw your like to tease; well, do go along."

"But, mother, I want some dinner to take."

"Oh, you'll be home by dinner-time."

"No, indeed; why it wouldn't be two hours: I want a lunch."

"Bless me, what a bother! Well, go find yourself a lunch."

I went into the house just in time to hear Cousin Ann's Dick begin: "Mother! can't I go fishing?"

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Cousin Ann looked carefully at Dick, as if considering his health, wants, and various capabilities in the fishing line. Then she looked out of doors, as if summing up the weather. Then she took a look into the wood-shed, to see if Dick's morning chopping and cleaning up had been done. Then she said, cheerfully: "Yes, Dick, it is a splendid day for fishing. Go get your old trowsers, and your big straw-hat, and I'll put you up a dinner: that is first and best part of a fishing in your view, I suppose."

Now I like that straightforward way of dealing with a child: know what you mean, and stick to it. I found that was one of Hester's cardinal points in child-training. While Hester was with me, a cousin of hers was called out of town, and left her little girl in Hester's care. The child was used to her own way, and a perfect tease. One day she asked to go to Mrs. Black's.

"No: not to-day," said Hester.

"Oh, yes; let me go; I want to go; why can't I go, say?"

"You were there yesterday."

"Never mind that: let me go; do *please* let me go."

Hester laid down her book and asked, quietly: "Anna, how many times do you mean to ask me to let you go?"

"Why, I don't know; do let me go; what did you ask that for?"

"Because if you have made up your mind how many times you will ask, you might as well begin and ask as fast as you can, and I can say 'no' all at once, without wasting words."

Anna opened her eyes in astonishment. Then she cried, angrily: "I'll ask you *fifty* times!"

Hester coolly got out a piece of paper and a pencil, and said: "Now begin; ask, and make a mark, and when you have fifty marks, you will be done asking and I will say 'no.'"

Anna caught the paper and began making marks, crying:

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"Let me go; let me go; let me go." Finally she stopped: "There! that's fifty."

But Hester had kept private tally. "No, dear: it is but twenty; go on."

Anna went on, but she wearied of asking, and wanted to go off. Hester held her left hand firmly. "No; you must keep your word. Ask on, until fifty times." Finally Anna had asked fifty times. "No, my dear: not to-day," said Hester, smoothly, and took up her book. Anna never again asked her twice for anything. Anna had been used to going to bed when she chose. Hester set eight o'clock for bed-time, and her law was like that of the Medes and Persians. Then we had this scene. "Come, Anna: it is bed-time."

"Let me sit up: I'm not sleepy."

Hester lit a lamp and took the child's hand.

"Oh, it's too early: I don't want to go to bed."

The two walked off up-stairs together. All the time the undressing went on Anna protested: "I don't want to go to bed."

"Now, Anna," said Hester, "it is time to say your prayers. But we pray to God, and you should think only of Him and what you will ask of Him as you kneel down. I cannot hear your prayers while you fret in this way."

A little talk put Anna in a mood for her prayers; she may have fancied that yielding thus far, Hester would yield in turn, and allow her to sit up. However, the prayer over, Hester put her into bed. "I don't want to go to bed!" screamed Anna.

"Anna," said Hester, "did I promise to take you to see Cousin Helen to-morrow? Do you expect I will do so?"

"You *said* you would," cried Anna.

"And I shall certainly do as I said. But if I did not keep my word to you about going to bed and such things as you

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" Love is the corner-stone of Home."
Washington's Early impressions of Truth.—*Chapter IV.*

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do *not* like, how could you trust my word when I promised you what you *do* like?"

"Maybe you will not take me if I am bad," said Anna.

"I shall take you whether or no, for I said that I would, and I cannot break my word."

"No matter how bad I am? If I scream and holla?"

"I shall not break my word for *any* badness. But how well would you enjoy going with me feeling that I was displeased with you, and that you had been a bad girl? We are not happy when we are ashamed: we are happy when we do right."

Anna made no reply, and Hester came down-stairs.

"I hope, Aunt Sophronia, that this child will not disturb you by her manœuvres."

"Not at all," I replied; "I am interested in seeing how you get along with her."

"It's my view, Miss Hester," said Martha, who came in, "that you have the patience of Job."

"It is not a question of patience," said Hester; "common-sense tells me, that if we want to govern children, we must first govern ourselves. As to yielding to her fretting, it is impossible. Decision is a matter of the first importance in training children. A 'yes' should be hearty and unconditional, except on those understood conditions of life, health and weather, which are not in human keeping. Our promise should be a rock on which the child could find unshaken foundation for building up its plans. Our 'no' should be a wall of brass, which the child shall give up all hope or endeavor of shaking. Of two evils I would maintain a foolish 'yes' and a selfish 'no' rather than shake a child's faith in the fixity of my promises. But one, by taking the trouble to consider, can prevent selfishness and folly in promises; and the well-being of these immortal natures is surely worth our most earnest consideration."

In fact, Hester has some very sound ideas about training

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children, and I said as much to her, and wondered at it when she had had no experience, even with younger brothers and sisters, as many girls have. She said it was merely the application of common-sense, and that she believed the reason people trained children so poorly was, that they did not apply their common-sense and foresight to the training of their families as they did to other things.

Hester's ideas of training take hold on looks and manners as well as on morals. We went one day to see Mary Smalley, who married a thriving young fellow named Watkins, and lives on a farm a mile from the village. Mary has a little girl two years old: a nice child, which she is proud of and worries over. The child has straight light hair, pretty enough as nature made it; but Mary's pride leads her to crimp it, by braiding it tightly over night, or doing it up over a hot hair-pin. Hester took exception to this. She said:

"Mary, do you suppose little Nettie cares how she looks? Is she happier for being crimped?"

"No," said Mary; "but *I* like to see it."

"Now is not that a little selfish, Mary? Suppose Nettie lives to be fifty years old. For the first dozen years of her life she cares nothing for her looks; if you keep her hair smooth and cut short in those years, you secure her a fine growth of silky locks, heavy and healthy. From twelve to twenty-five let us say that she has a little vanity in dressing-up and looking pretty. You have secured, in this nice hair, one of the most natural and admirable ornaments of a young maiden. After twenty-five, while she is less vain, let us hope that she will desire to be comely and pleasing in her looks; she may have a husband to admire her; and we know the Scripture says that a woman's long hair is a glory to her. Of this glory of womanhood and beauty of girlhood, you, a selfish mother, will deprive your daughter, if for your own taste in this first dozen of years you

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ruin her hair with crimping, and weaken it by letting it grow long. Only keeping hair well brushed, and growing naturally, and cut short will secure a fine growth. Besides, Mary, if Nettie must be frizzed and crimped as a baby, how much crimping and braiding and foolish decoration will she want in her young ladyhood? Will you not lead her into those idle vanities of dressing hair, which the Scripture reprobates in women professing godliness?"

"Why, I never thought of all this," said Mary; "and is keeping the hair short, and letting it grow its own way, the only means to have it soft and abundant when one is grown up?"

"Yes, Mary," I said; "nothing hurts the hair more than tight crimping, frizzing on hot pins or rolling up over bits of tin. Wash the head in cold water, brush it often and briskly, trim off the ends of the hair; and for a child, keep it cut short."

"I'll do my best for Nettie's hair then," said Mary; "but now tell me: Nettie sucks her thumb. Some tell me to make her stop it, others say it is of no consequence. What do you say?"

"It is a habit that grows on a child; it spoils the thumb and the shape of the mouth; I should stop it."

"But how? I have tied on a rag, but she sucks it still."

"Fasten on a little glove-thumb, buttoned around her wrist, so that she cannot pull it off; and soak the glove-thumb in aloes. She will soon tire of putting it in her mouth."

Nettie had a blue ribbon on her hair. The child's real defect is, that her ears stand out too widely from her head. Hester had the little thing on her lap, and she took off this ribbon, and re-tied it, placing the edges over the upper part of the ears, binding them to the head with an easy pressure. She said to Mary, who was complaining that Nettie's ears were not pretty:

"Nature needs a little aiding. Let her wear her ribbons this way, night and day, until she is seven or eight years old, and

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you will have conquered the defect entirely. And this fashion of head-ribbon is becoming to her."

"Hester," said Mary, "you used to condemn dress and vanity so much, I thought you would call it foolish to care about good looks."

"Beauty is a gift of God," said Hester; "good looks are, in themselves, a pleasure to all beholders. To cultivate good looks or personal beauty is different from cultivating vanity, for in proportion as self-conscious vanity comes in, really good looks vanish. Since God is right in sending some children into the world beautiful, and all with some elements of beauty, we are right in doing all that we can to aid nature, and to make the personal appearance beautiful. I think there is no finer sight than to see gathered about the table a beautiful family; there is something elevating and refining in that very beauty if it is unmixed with low vanity and self-display; and in every family there will be more or less of this beauty, if there is neatness, grace, gentleness, loving-kindness. Plato says: 'Let our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and beauty, the effluence of fair works, will meet the sense like a breeze, and insensibly draw the soul, even in childhood, into harmony with beauty and reason.'"

"Ah!" said Mary, "what a pity that we cannot all be beautiful!"

"We can," said Hester. "There are three great elements of personal beauty: first, healthfulness; second, intelligence of expression; third, youthfulness. By cultivating, then, health of body, developing our minds to the best of our abilities, and being too industrious, patient and cheerful to get fretful and care-lined and old, we shall always be very beautiful. And in this beauty, parents should train their children."

Helen and Hester have not quite ceased their early disputations. One day we were all going to visit Cousin Ann. Hester

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put on Anna a clean calico frock, a pair of stout shoes and a wide-brimmed hat; Helen dressed little Tom in embroidered skirts, wide sash and kid boots. Hester argued that we deprived children of their natural right to develop healthfully and free of care, when we loaded them with fine clothes which they must take care of. "A child of Tom's age is a hearty little animal in one-half of its nature, and has a right to untrammelled exercise, plenty of air and sun, and playing in 'clean dirt' like earth and sand. Parents are unjust who deprive children of out-door life for fear that they will mar their complexions, or of exercise, lest they shall tear their clothes. We load children unnecessarily with the curse of the Fall, when we load them with unneedful clothing; their clothes should not be a care to them, but such clothes as they could forget and be happy. What a spectacle to make angels weep did I see lately on Chestnut street! A nine-year-old miss, in rich silk and lace, and flounces, and feathers, watch, fan, chains, rings, parasol, necklace, bracelets, laced pocket-handkerchief—costing perhaps six or seven hundred dollars of dress as she stood—mincing along in tight boots and tight waist, pale-cheeked, and tired out. And I thought of plump, rosy, little country lassies, in gingham gown and best white apron, easy shoes, and sheltering sunbonnet, racing along the road-sides, swinging a book-satchel, and able to climb fence or tree like a boy or a squirrel, and I thanked God that there would be at least a few women left for the next generation."

The fact is, Helen, while fond of her children, feels that her chief mission is to their clothes: to keep them well dressed, well fed, and given nice rooms. She does not realize that the best thing a mother can give her children is—herself. We were at Helen's one day when little Tom ran in with a fuzzy ball: "Mamma! what is this?"

"Tom, pet! your feet! all dusty, and—don't touch my work, your hands are dirty—pray throw that thing out."

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"But what is it, mamma? what is it?"

"Why, I don't know, child: a bit of cotton, perhaps."

Tom looked disappointed. "Such a child," said Helen: "forever asking questions!"

Hester took Tom, helped herself to a plate and tumbler, went out on the verandah, made a large spider captive and returned. Tom screamed at the spider.

"Come, come," said Hester, "don't be a silly boy. See here: this is Mrs. Spider. She is a mamma, and instead of three babies like your mamma, she has about a hundred. To keep her babies warm and dry, she spun them this fuzzy ball which you brought in: it is their cradle. Come and look what soft, yellow silk blankets; peep in now, while I pull the blanket open; do you see all those little squirming things? Those are Mrs. Spider's babies, kicking about because their bed-clothes are off. Those little shiny balls are more babies, not big enough to kick."

"Oh, how little! will they grow big?" cried Tom.

"Yes, they will be as big as their mamma, by-and-by."

"But so many! they'll run all over the house."

"No, Tom, as they begin to get out, rain and cold will kill some; the birds and big insects will eat a good many, and so only very few will live to get as big as Spider Mamma."

"Poor weeny spiders; let's put 'em all out-doors now."

"Bless me," said Helen, when Hester returned, "you'd be a treasure to Tom, if you'd satisfy his mind that way.'

"Dear Helen," said Hester, "it is *your duty* to satisfy his mind. If you teach him to take interest in natural things, talk to him, and fill his little head with the good and useful and the wonders of God's work, you will leave little room in it for vice and folly that some day might break your heart."

"But I've no time, Hester," pleaded Helen.

"Take time for what is so important. Have less ruffles and

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fancy trimmings; and you can talk to him while you sew or nurse the baby; look at his curiosities, and talk of them."

"But I don't know about all these wonders of nature."

"You *can* know easily enough. Newspapers and magazines are full of articles on natural history; if you cannot read all that is in the magazine, omit the stories. There are dozens of cheap little books on insects, birds, shells, animals; feel it a duty to read these for your children's sake. Throw away the novels and read these. I think fewer wives would complain of loneliness in the needful absence of their husbands, and their own severance from society, if they set seriously about being the companions and teachers and friends of their children, and making these children companions for themselves. Have Mark put up two or three low shelves in the back of the hall, and encourage Tom to make a museum there of his wonderful curiosities; if you talk with him about them, you may make a philosopher of him, at least you will make him an observing and happy little boy. In all your work it would, if you once accustomed yourself to it, be a relief to your own mind and a great pleasure also to satisfy the curiosity of your child, and develop his growing thoughts."

Helen presently began complaining how destructive Tom was. Mrs. Burr had come in, and she said: "Trust me, Helen, where there is *destructiveness* there is also *constructiveness;* you can stop children's destroying things by giving them something to make. I think all children, but especially boys, should have scissors and glue, hammer, nails, knife, boards, paper and paste, and let them invent, and contrive, and manufacture: you will soon see that they prefer putting things together to pulling them to pieces."

"But what a house it would be with children provided in that style," objected Helen.

"They ought to have a place for such work: a corner of the

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wood-shed or barn, or a share of the attic, or a place curtained off somewhere if you have no separate room. A small room over a kitchen, a room with a stove-pipe running through it in winter, is a choice place for a boy's shop. You were glad when Tom was born that you had a *son:* don't now wish that he was a girl; or what is as foolish, wish that he developed like a girl into sewing and doll-playing. The boy spirit will out, and it is yours to guide it aright."

"I often think I am foolish," said Helen, "to worry over Tom's ways, his noise, and curiosity and mischief. You have no idea how mischievous he is."

"I remember," I said, "that Cousin Ann told me how mischievous Fred was when he first ran alone. One day his father was shaving, getting ready for church; he had a new high silk hat on the table; he heard a crash: Fred had taken the hat and turning it crown upward had made a seat of it. His father flew to rescue the hat, and while he tried to straighten it, he looked up, and there was Fred, razor in hand, getting ready to shave."

"What ever did she do with such a child?" cried Helen.

"She said she reasoned that here was the result of great energies and an active mind. The child must have an outlet for these in work, study and play. She kept him employed picking up chips, setting the shoes in the closet in rows, feeding chickens, observing the habits of birds, making lamp-lighters, even stringing buttons; and finally secured a habit of directing his energies to useful labor, rather than to mischief. Believe me, Helen, we have not fulfilled our part to our children, when they are fed, nursed and clothed: we must *teach* them. And we have not done our part in teaching when we have taught them their prayers, their alphabet, to sew, to count, and have then sent them to school. We must guide their energies into proper outlets, and never weary in informing their minds."

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"And," said Mrs. Burr, "we must build them up in honesty, unselfishness, kindness, industry, purity of mind and word."

"And," added Hester, "all these virtues must rest on the foundation stone of *obedience*, regard for law. I remember Plato says: 'Our youths should be educated in a stricter rule from the first, for if education becomes lawless, and the youths them selves become lawless, they can never grow up into well-con lucted and virtuous citizens.'"

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CHAPTER V.

SICKNESS IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA ON NURSING AND HEALTH-PRESERVING.

I HEARD a foolish neighbor once remark, that he always felt angry at sick people—that sickness was a mere outcome of wickedness. God made people to be healthy, and when they were not so, it was because they had been violating some plain principle of life, "doing something that they ought not to have done, or leaving undone those things which they ought to have done—and there is no health in them:" he quoted the prayer-book right then and there. I felt quite provoked at him, and I said: "My good friend, you'll have to carry some of your anger as far back as Adam, to find a suitable object, because sickness is part of the curse of the Fall, and is the seed of death, which Adam brought into the world. Do you remember what Christ said about the man that was born blind? 'Neither did this man sin, nor his parents, that he was born blind,' meaning that the blindness was the fruit of no especial wickedness in them."

However, as I calmly consider it, I see that there *was* a grain of sense in my neighbor's observations; there is in most people's, and I must relieve my mind by saying that there is not *more* than a grain of sense in most people's talk. Still the more I think upon it, the more clearly I see that sickness, especially epidemics, and diseases of a kind which seize upon whole families, or recur frequently in the same families, are often, perhaps nearly always, the result of some ignorance or carelessness of our own.

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We do not half understand the laws of health; we do not study half carefully enough the needs and dangers of our own bodies; we do not half enough respect our bodies, which we should cherish and regard as homes of immortal spirits, and especially because, if we will have it so, God himself condescends to abide in his people, and to use humanity for his service. That is a poor form of religion which affects to despise the body that God made in his own image.

When I read the biographies of such men as Martyn, Payson, Brainerd and others, who have done great good in the world, but, doing it burdened by feeble bodies, finally died prematurely, and so deprived humanity of much more good which they might have done had they lived to the ordinary limit of human life, I consider their evident neglect of their bodies, their reckless exposure to fatigue and storms, their depriving them of proper nourishment, a positive crime. Many good men have so lived that they made it impossible for God to spare them for longer work, except by a miracle, so did they contravene the laws and despise the lights of nature. In this present day, possibly, there is too much devotion to purely physical culture, and good men indulge their bodies too much, and devote to their comfort too large a proportion of their thoughts and efforts. There is a happy mean to be attained, and toward that we should move. Sickly bodies very often produce feeble brains, bad manners, and bad morals. This is especially true where the feebleness of body begins in childhood; the weakly child cannot learn with zeal and pleasure: it is peevish and cowardly; a house full of sickly children is a house full of cares, anxious and overtaxed parents, confusion, and often poverty, induced by the heavy expenses of illness. The Home can only be really bright and orderly where there is general health and vigor. A husband and father works at a great disadvantage, who goes out to his daily toil wearied with a wakeful night by a sick-bed, and bur-

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dened with anxiety for the patients left behind him. In God's providence such seasons occur in most homes, but it is also in God's providence that we should strive to have them occur as seldom as possible.

It seems to me that the ancients very appropriately had a goddess as well as a god of health and the healing art, inasmuch as the care and preservation of health comes so largely within the natural sphere of woman. Vigorous constitutions can be built up in well-conducted homes, and this even when the natural constitution is feeble. I have done in my time a great deal of talking on the subject of healthful homes. At Mrs. Black's some one is sick half or more than half the time; I visited Mrs. Black once to offer any service in my power, when two of her daughters were ill. Mrs. Black said: "It is impossible to keep well in this world where there are so many things to induce disease." I replied: "We must not blame the world too rashly, Mrs. Black, for we shall find that while there are many things to induce disease, there are just as many to produce good health."

"Look at our changeful climates: hot one day, cold the next."

"True; but if, summer and winter, we would wear a flannel garment next the skin, varying the thickness of the garment with the change of season, we should, provided we kept the feet in sufficiently thick shoes, very seldom be affected by the changes in the temperature."

"As for flannel," said Mrs. Black, "my girls won't wear it; it makes them look so stout and full about the chest and waist."

"I hope the day will come," I replied, "when a wasp-waist and a pair of thin shoulders will not be esteemed beauty: we have had our ideas ruined by trash novels, praising 'fragile forms' and 'delicate beauty,' 'dainty waists,' 'snow-drop faces,' and a lot of other nonsense. What prospect have such beauties of seeing three-score, or what physique are their sons likely to

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possess? Indeed, Mrs. Black, I think you should have made it a matter of course, from infancy, that your children wore flannel under-garments. Really, there is nothing cheaper, safer, or more comfortable. I knew a young girl whose two elder sisters had died with consumption; symptoms of the disease appeared in her: a friend took her to a famous physician. He said: 'She had better be sent to the south of France.' The lady replied: 'Doctor, her parents are absolutely unable to take her away from home; they have not the means.' The doctor meditated: it was November: 'Has she flannel on?' No, the young lady did not like flannel. 'Take her home,' said the doctor, 'and put her in heavy flannel from her neck to her toes, and see that she wears it, with some variation as to quality, twelve months in the year.' The order was obeyed, and for ten years she has been in good health."

"And there is another means of health-preserving, Mrs. Black, which we greatly neglect—*sunshine*. Plenty of sunshine is a very wine of life. We should let it fall broadly into our rooms, especially where we eat, sit and sleep. Nine months in the year our windows should daily stand broadly open for a sun-bath. In our hot summers, our homes seem to get saturated with sunshine, unless our houses are very thickly shaded by vines and trees, and possibly then two hours of early morning sunshine will be enough."

"But, my dear Miss Sophronia, it ruins the carpets."

"Better sacrifice the carpets than the health: we are too much the slaves of carpets; if I could not have the carpet and the sun, I would give up the carpet. The sunbeams hold no spores of disease: carpets frequently do; sunbeams have no dust, dangerous to weak lungs: carpets do. But, Mrs. Black, a drugget, or a carpet-cover, or even a coarse sheet can be flung over the carpet if it needs protecting; and then let in those invigorating rays, which God meant should counteract disease. I believe many

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diseases can be cured by merely plenty of fresh air and sun shine."

Mrs. Black was dwelling on my heterodoxy as to carpets.

"Dear Miss Sophronia! banish carpets! bare floors! What would you do? How would you live?"

"Mrs. Black, it seems to me that we do not sufficiently value mattings, especially in bed-rooms. They are free from dust; of a good quality, they wear a long time; they are easy to sweep; they look clean; and the sun does not harm them: remember, they grew under tropic suns; they have no harmful dye-stuffs in them. Some object that they are cold, but this can be obviated by rugs laid before the bed, washstand and bureau. Let me tell you my experience: I spent a year once, while my house was being built, with my half-sister in the city. She treated me royally; my bed-room was dressed in rose and gray French chintz, rose-tinted wall-paper, and had a rose-colored velvet carpet. It was altogether too fine for the sun to shine in: the sun would ruin it. A furnace, with air-feeders from out of doors, kept the house warm and dry; but nevertheless I was a martyr to rheumatism. Cousin Ann, hearing this, sent for me to spend the next winter with her at the farm. My room had white-washed walls, white curtains, a white counterpane and white matting."

"Goodness!" interrupted Mrs. Black, "I should think it would have made you think of a whited sepulchre!"

"Not at all," I retorted: "its conditions were such that it was unlikely to have in it either rottenness or dead men's bones. Color was lent it by three or four bright rugs and a colored set of toilette mats, with a few pictures. I kept wondering why that simple room looked and *felt* so beautiful. I perceived that the floods of sunshine, which, during the whole day, poured in at one of its three bright windows lent it its chief charm. My health was perfectly restored."

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"Well," said Mrs. Black, "my girls would rather be sick half the time than get well by wearing flannels and stout shoes, and going out in the sun exercising and spoiling their complexions or having their carpets and curtains faded out by having all the blinds open."

"But as a mere matter of beauty, Mrs. Black," I urged. "There is no beauty in a sallow, sickly complexion, and if they are sick half the time, what will result? Medicine and bad digestion will ruin their teeth; ill health will make their faces wan and faded; their color will be lost; their hair will be dry and thin; at twenty-five they will look ten years older; they will have a fretted, disappointed, troubled expression, and will always feel dispirited and uncomfortable."

However, there is no use talking with Mrs. Black. It is no wonder that her girls are so captious, and look so feeble. Thin-soled shoes, no flannel, no exercise, very little fresh air, and almost no sunshine in their house; and this record might do for very many other families.

When Miriam and Helen set up housekeeping, I especially urged on them the advantages of fresh air in their houses, and plenty of sunshine. I said:

"Don't have any shut-up rooms and corners in your homes to breed pestilence; sun and air the rooms that are unused, as well as those that are used. Remember, a housekeeper is the health-keeper of her household; her vigilance should extend over the whole house from garret to cellar. The housekeeper should visit her garret to see that it has ventilation, and is not a tight-box to be crowded with bad air and fumes rising from the other parts of the house, and being packed there to continue their corruption, and come down in unexpected puffs; the garret should be kept free from dust, and should have a lattice-window always open; or, if you have not that and cannot have it, have a small window, or half a window, with a piece of stout

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muslin nailed tightly over it: that will secure ventilation and sufficiently turn rain.

"When a wise man goes abroad, he puts a hat on his head and shoes on his feet, protecting both extremities. Don't forget the feet of your house—feet planted in the cellar: have a clean cellar and a dry cellar. I should have the cellar lime-washed, drained, and made dry, if I went without a parlor sofa or a best set of china to be able to get the means for these improvements."

"Upon my word, aunt," said Helen, "I thought Hannah could be trusted with the *cellar*."

"Not a bit of it, my dear; she could much more safely be trusted with the parlor; she would take more interest in that, and could better appreciate the need of tidy dusting to make a place fit for callers, than the need of cellar-cleaning to make a house healthful. You have a swing-shelf: suppose a bowl of gravy is there upset and left to mould; that in a corner of the floor half a peck of small potatoes are left to sprout long, sickly stems; that on a box a few cabbage-leaves hastily stripped from the head lie rotting; that an odd turnip, carrot, beet, parsnip or two are also decaying here and there. All of these things generate disease; from this vegetable decay, housed in a cellar, which Hannah never thinks to air, there will float into your pretty bed-room, your immaculate parlor, spores of fever and sore throat. Your milk and butter, brought from this poisoned cellar, are mysteriously corrupted before you eat them, and they vitiate your blood. You should visit your cellar at least every other day. If the potatoes begin to sprout, you should have the sprouts rubbed off and carried away, not left to die in the cellar. Every week the shelf should be scrubbed with hot soda-water or soft soap-suds, the floor swept, the windows opened for a thorough airing; not a scrap of animal or vegetable matter should be left there to decay. Trust me, Helen, a cellar is a very important part of the house, and a house cannot be healthy where there is an ill-kept cellar."

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I was very glad that Mark and Miriam realized the necessities of ventilation and thorough drainage. The drain, which carried off the water from the washing, sloped well, and ran some distance from the house. I have seen people fling washing-suds out close to their houses. "What odds clean suds?" they cry It seems to me that the suds which our soiled clothes are washed in cannot be very clean; and as we know that the suds which garments of small-pox, cholera and fever-patients are washed in contain the germs of the disease, and cast upon the ground are likely to breed that disease in their locality, so we might suppose that many of the lesser ailments of our bodies contribute their share of disease germs, which can do harm in their own proportion, through the decaying suds of a family washing. Again, some very tidy housekeepers do not realize the excessive caution that should be used with sinks and drains, where bath-water, dish-water and scrubbing-water are cast out. More diseases than we now suspect are propagated by minute spores. It is about a century since the "germ theory" of disease was first announced, and we are daily learning more and more, that as the air is filled with spores of cryptogamous plants, distributing fungus and all varieties of mould, so is the air filled with floating particles of disease, gathered not only by swamps and sick-beds, and by sloughs of confessedly and notoriously unclean matter, but very often from places which we suppose to be clean and safe. Dr. Richardson tells us that the spores of small-pox, yellow, typhoid and scarlet fevers, cholera, diphtheria, measles, and kindred diseases are so small that twenty thousand of them, end to end, would not reach the length of an inch; fifty million might be put in a cubic inch. Yet each spore could create its own disease in a human frame, falling on some tissue irritated by cold, or inflamed, or weakened, or even normally healthy.

I had a talk once with Miriam on the subject of *sal-soda*.

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which talk Miriam thought very beneficial to her. I said to her. "Miriam,"—for I was with her in the kitchen, where she was making pies, and I was knitting by the window—"Miriam, there is hardly a more valuable agent in household cleanliness than *sal-soda*. It is very cheap, from two to four cents a pound. If you put a pound of it in a gallon of water and throw half a teacup of this solution into your dish-water once a day, say at dinner, you will find the trouble of dish-washing reduced one-half, as the soda destroys the grease: your dish-cloth or mop would be kept white and pure with very little rubbing: you would save soap, and you could more easily keep your sink and its drain clean. Your sink is scrubbed beautifully clean, but you cannot so scour the pipe which carries out the water. The particles of animal and vegetable matter in the dish-water, the grease which it contains, adhere by degrees to the sides of the pipe, coat it, and there corrupt. You scald the sink with hot soap-suds, that pass into the pipe and are a help in removing this decayed matter, but cannot remove all of it. If the pipe is metal, the decay unites with the metal and produces mineral as well as animal and vegetable poison. A current of air drives up through the pipe, and carries with it viewless atoms of violent poison and dangerous decay, and they tremble in the air of your house: or ever you are aware, they have entered your nose, throat and stomach. These atoms can produce influenza, diphtheria, fever. Therefore, at all cost, let us have these drain-pipes clean. The sal-soda in your dish-water will here be a great help, devouring the grease in the dish-water and on the sides of the pipe. Twice a week take some strong boiling sal-soda water and pour it slowly down your sink. Once a month at least treat it in this way with concentrated lye-water; boiling soft-soap suds is also very valuable for this use. Cousin Ann, who always has a leech of ashes set up, mixes boiling water and strong lye, and pours it through her drains once a week: she

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uses a little lye-water instead of the sal-soda for her dishes also. A little sal-soda water used in scouring tables, floors which are unpainted, pie-boards, rolling-pins, and other woodenware, keeps them immaculately clean at small cost in trouble and expense."

I noticed what Mrs. Burr said one day in regard to the health of Homes. "We have yet to come to a realizing sense of the danger to our health that lies in decaying things. Decay is part of death; atoms of decay planted in the tissues of our bodies are so many seeds of death. And yet how are we surrounded by this decay, and unconscious or careless of it! We use the same wall-paper for years, or leave a whitewashed wall, season after season, untouched. In these walls, especially in those hung with paper, are planted atoms of corruption breathed out by sick people, wafted from beds of fever, gathered out of malarious air. Shelves, sinks, drains, wooden vessels are washed, and look clean, but buried in their fibre is corrupting animal or vegetable matter. Cleanly housekeepers, of course, will be sure to have perfectly clean dish-cloths, towels and kettle-cloths; and yet hundreds who would resent being called *dirty* have a mass of filthy rags tucked into corners for use in the kitchen, and around cooking vessels, any rag of which is foul enough to breed a pestilence. More than half our servants doat on a pot-closet as a convenient dust-hole, and few of them are so cleanly that their mistresses may be exempted from a personal inspection of that locality. The soap-grease firkin and the swill-pail become centres of corruption, and before we know it the cistern, built, as most of them are, without a filter, becomes deadly. A housekeeper needs the hundred eyes of Argus to see that her home is free from these dangers. And why not? Argus was merely watching golden apples, but the housewife is set on guard over the health of husband, children and guests."

When children came into the homes of Miriam and Helen,

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and other of my young friends and relations, I felt more than ever anxious that they should know how to preserve the healthfulness of their homes. I was talking to Cousin Ann about this one day, when she laughed and said she would make my nieces, Mary Smalley, and some other of the young folks, a present. A few weeks after she sent them each a large card, with a few lines handsomely printed upon it, thus:

HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHFUL HOUSE.

Have plenty of sunshine in your living rooms.
Keep the whole house well aired.
Have a clean garret, well ventilated.
Have a perfectly clean, dry cellar.
Renew whitewash and wall-paper often.
Have every drain clean and carried far from the house.
Allow no decaying refuse near the house.
Keep the walls and floors dry.
Use freely, in cleaning, lye, ammonia, and sal-soda.
Use freely lime, especially as whitewash.

I took one of these cards in triumph to Mary Smalley; it was about a year after she married Samuel Watkins, as fine a young fellow as one would wish to see. Mary was nursing little Nettie, and I sat down with her in the kitchen. It was a lovely June afternoon. The honeysuckle vine over the porch was in bloom; the door-step and the yard around were clean as a broom could make them; the kitchen floor was well painted in yellow, and Mary's favorite mats were scattered about, and a pretty cover of her manufacture was over a little stand by the window. Mary had followed her own good taste in many of her arrangements, and she had taken example also by Miriam, who had been very friendly to her.

She had taken a girl of about twelve from an asylum to help her in the house, and this girl was out under an apple tree scour-

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ing tins. The whole house and its environs made a pretty picture of comfort, thrift and content. I said as much to Mary.

"We get on very nicely," said Mary. "I do not get my work done quite as easily as Mrs. Rogers; but then she had not the cows and the chickens and the farm-hands, as I have. But thanks to mother's teaching me how to work, and Mrs. Rogers showing me good methods of doing it, I succeed very well."

I gave Mary the card: she read it and was well pleased; but after looking at it for a time, she said:

"This tells us how to have a healthy house; but is that all we need to know to have healthy children? Let her tell us how we must take care of them—to have them hearty and healthy in this healthy house."

I thought Mary's point was very well made, so I said:

"Truly, Mary, you are interesting yourself in a subject which should occupy every mother's thoughts. I will speak to Cousin Ann on the matter, and see what information she can give you."

I went out accordingly to visit Cousin Ann, and as we sat comfortably together between dinner and tea, I took from my pocket a bit of Doctor Guthrie's writing, and read to her as follows:

"With care and prudence human life may be extended considerably beyond the ordinary period. The truth is, few people die a natural death. Some are murdered; but the greater part, who have arrived at years of discretion, commit a sort of suicide, through their neglect of the ordinary rules of health, or their injudicious use of meat, drink, or medicine."

"That is true enough," said Cousin Ann, adjusting her spectacles; "but a large part of the human race do not arrive at years of discretion: those who die in childhood, I suppose Doctor Guthrie would set down as murdered after a sort, namely, by the ignorance or indiscretion of parents."

"And doubtless, cousin, the foundation of living in a serene

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old age, 'beyond the ordinary limit of human years,' is laid in infancy, by careful physical culture."

"Be sure it is. I devoted my cares to securing health for my children from their first breath."

"And very likely you found your cares more efficient and judicious for your sixth child than for your first."

"Certainly; else where would be the good of experience?"

"And if, in the babyhood of your first child, some well-experienced mother had given you the benefit of her observations, it might have been exceedingly useful to you, and yours."

"Yes, certainly; only in a measure, rules being laid down, we must learn to apply them for ourselves. Still, good rules are of unspeakable value."

"Well, Cousin Ann, these young mothers among our friends want to get the benefit of your experience, and desire that you should give them some instructions in regard to training physically their little ones."

"Bless me, Sophronia," said Cousin Ann; "as far as that goes, you have looked into the subject of health-keeping as fully as I have, and can tell them all they need to know."

"That may be, cousin. Yet, as you have raised six hearty children, the advice might come with more weight and authority from your lips than from mine, even though the advice was identical in both cases."

So after a little talking Cousin Ann agreed to make a tea-party and afternoon visit for our young friends, and I went around with the invitations. They came early, and were all expectation to hear Cousin Ann's advice.

"Come," said Helen, "we expect to be packed full of learning which shall benefit our descendants at least to the fourth generation. Begin, Cousin Ann; time is not tarrying."

"How am I to begin?" asked Cousin Ann. "Upon my word, I don't know what I ought to say, nor where to commence."

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"Begin at the beginning," said Miriam. "Here are these blessed babies; they are darling little animals which spend half their time in eating, and the other half in sleeping, and if there is any time left over, they occupy it in staring about."

"They act as nature dictates," said Cousin Ann, "and which work—eating or sleeping—is the more important I cannot tell. As to the sleeping, strive to promote it, for by it a babe grows. Never let rude noises rouse it; let no pride in displaying the child, no neighborly curiosity, call it from slumber; let it sleep in silence, and in a room moderately darkened; have an absolutely regular time for putting it to sleep at night, whether it seems sleepy or not: habit is all-powerful. At that bed-time strip off all its day-garments, don't leave for night even a shirt worn in day; and let the child sleep in flannel which is clean, and during the day has been well-aired and sunned. Some children thrive on a bath both at rising and at bed-time; some are better only for the morning-bath. If the child is not fully bathed at night, wash its head well in cold water, and rub the whole body briskly with your hand or a soft towel: this promotes circulation and induces slumber. Until a child is six years old, encourage it to sleep late in the morning, for the first years of a child's life need much sleep. After the child is six, have a regular hour for rising as well as for retiring; but never fail to send it early to bed until it is thirteen years old. A child should be covered warmly, but not too warmly; its sleeping place should be well aired, and it should never sleep with its head covered up. Neither is it good for a child to sleep sunk in feathers, or in a bed with grown people; for the little creatures sink down and injure their blood by inhaling bad air. A moderately hard bed, which daily is well aired and sunned, is best for a child. I prefer to any other a straw bed, where the straw is renewed *at least* every three months—better every two Little children should sleep much in the day-time; even if

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they do not seem sleepy it is better, morning and afternoon, to wash their hands and faces, put on a loose slip, remove their shoes, and place them on a bed: they will soon get a habit of sleeping at these intervals; their constant activity when waking and the necessities of growth demand much rest."

Cousin Ann paused, and our party discussed the sleep ques tion for some time. Then Mary Smalley said:

"Cousin Ann, what about the other point—the child's food?"

"Nature itself teaches," said Cousin Ann, "that if a mother is healthful and able to nurse her babe from her own breast, she should do so. If this is impossible, I would prefer feeding a child to the dangers of wet-nursing. Some physicians advocate goats' milk rather than cows'; whichever milk is used, a mother should prepare it and the vessels in which it is placed herself, using most scrupulous care as regards the purity and the soundness of the food, its temperature, quality and flavor. You ruin a child's health by giving it one while hot milk, again cold milk; now unsweetened, now loaded with sugar; letting the bottle or cup smell of stale milk, or the milk offered be on the verge of acidity.

"I have seen people give a child of six or eight months old all kinds of food, even to cucumber-pickle and salt pork. A young child should have milk alone for six months at least. Possibly then a little well-made, clear mutton-broth or beef-tea might be given occasionally. The next addition to diet could be ground rice made into a thin gruel, *provided you grind the rice yourself.* By the time a child is ten months old it might be allowed a bit of broiled beefsteak or a wing of fowl to suck in its own fashion. When it is a year old, boiled oats, rice, a baked potato smoothly mashed, a little corn-meal mush or gruel, and ripe fruit may find a place on its bill of fare. Never give a child, under six years old, cake, preserves, pies, tea, coffee or pickles. Let their food be plain, given at regular intervals, well cooked, using

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little fat, and no fried things, and the variety not very great. A child, who has plenty of sleep, plenty of good air, plenty of play out of doors, will always be ready for a hearty meal of bread or mush and milk, baked potatoes, mutton or rice-pudding. Don't fancy every time a babe cries that it is hungry; perhaps its discomfort is from surfeit. Don't urge a child to eat, pampering its appetite, and pressing dainties upon it; and don't check its appetite for plain, wholesome food. Remember the child eats to live and to grow, and it needs more food in proportion to its size than a man needs."

"Should children eat between meals?" asked Mary Watkins.

"I should never refuse a child an apple or a slice of plain bread and butter between meals; for all we know the little one may really be faint and hungry; neither should I give a child a hearty lunch just before dinner or just after breakfast. Children get a habit of eating at improper times. I have seen children screaming for toast or meat, just as they got into bed, an hour after supper. Don't give a child pie, cake, or bread piled with sugar, honey or molasses between meals. When it asks for bread, never refuse it."

"Now for the baby's third fashion of spending its time; for instance, in staring around," said Helen.

"There is little to say as to that; never let the child sit or lie with light falling across its eyes, nor gazing at a strong light. Don't let it have hangings or playthings too near its eyes; put whatever it looks at fairly before it, and let it have plenty to look at. Babies like bright things; make them balls or cushions of bright-colored worsteds, generally of red, *never of green or brown*, lest there be poison in the dye; little cats and rabbits of cotton flannel, and rag-dolls dressed in gay colors, are things to please its eye, and cannot hurt it when it knocks them about, or thrusts them in its mouth. As the child is older, give it books made of pictures pasted on leaves of muslin, sewed in a strong cover.

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Let the room where a child spends its waking hours be bright and cheerful; let pleasant faces and voices surround it; don't jerk it or startle it; happiness is a large element in health fulness."

"Tell me, Cousin Ann," said I, "do you carry out through life your rule of changing all one's garments from day to night?"

"Yes," replied Cousin Ann; "I think many a fever, many a fit of jaundice or biliousness, would be saved if one would divest themselves at night of *all* which they wear during the day. Many wear the same flannel vest night and day; they would be far more robust and cheery if the day flannel were removed, well shaken and hung up wrong side out during the night, and a night flannel were used, served the same fashion by day. I have seen people allow children to go to bed in their stockings, because they say the beds are cold: that plan is terribly unhealthful, and promotive of sore throats and fevers. Every child's feet should be well warmed and dried before retiring; a mother should see to that herself, and if from lack of circulation the feet do not keep warm at night, then heat an old flannel skirt, or a piece of a blanket, and let the feet be wrapped up in that. Many a weary hour by sick beds, many tears over coffins would be saved, if mothers looked more closely after their children's feet, that they might be warmed when cold, and have shoes and hose changed when wet."

"Many people would say your idea about night and day flannels demanded too many clothes, and made too large washings," suggested Mary Watkins.

"I should reply, that clothes were cheaper than doctors' bills, and washing less onerous work than sick-nursing. Besides, a set of flannels too thin for further day-use, can be darned and mended up for night, and as after all the clothing is worn but twenty-four hours out of a day, I cannot see that washing would be materially increased."

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"Do you think people should sleep in winter between sheets or blankets?" asked one of Cousin Ann's auditors.

"Between sheets, by all means: they are likely to be changed each week, and blankets, owing to weight and color, are not likely to get washed so often. Pounds of insensible perspiration, carrying particles of waste matter, flow off from the pores of our bodies during sleep; this refuse matter fills the clothes we wear, and our bedding: thence arises the need of exchange between night and day clothes, and of ample washing and airing of our bedding. Some people make their beds as soon as they rise. This is a dangerous plan; not tidy, as they fancy, but really very dirty. I think one reason why Germans are so healthy generally is, that they have such a passion for airing their beds; they let them lie airing half the time. However, I believe an hour each morning, when the night and bed-clothes are spread well out to air and sunlight, and perhaps two hours on sweeping day, will keep the beds in very good order."

Cousin Ann began to bustle about, as if she thought that she had talked quite enough. But Miriam cried out: "One word, Cousin Ann, on exercise and play."

"Take a lesson from the young of the brute creation— from the calves, colts and lambs. They thrive on air, sunshine and free gambols. Let your children go out every day, unless perhaps in heavy rain. You can soon inure them to cold or damp weather, if they are well protected and do not sit down in the wet or draughts. Don't fear sun and wind for them: let them race and climb and jump, and dress them in strong, easy-fitting clothes, so that they may be untrammelled in the development of their muscles. Don't force a child to any study before it is seven years old; before that time you can make a play of learning to read, to count, and to draw and cipher a little. In the reading you provide a pleasant occupation for days of storm or ill health.

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Most bright children, with a box of letter-blocks, an alphabet card and a picture primer, will pick up reading before they are more than five. Give a child a seat suited to its height, and with a back; let its pillow be very low; don't hurry it as a babe to sit, stand or walk before nature urges it to do so: this over-haste and letting the boneless legs bear the child's weight give weak backs and crooked limbs. Each night and morning as you dress the young child, firmly and gently rub and press the legs straight, doing your part to prevent that ugly curve which distorts so many weak legs. If you want your child to be vigorous in play and exercise, give it an abundance of baths: bathe it every day, using warm or cold water—never *hot*, never *freezing*, but warm or cold as best agrees with your child's constitution. Don't forget that in infancy and childhood you are starting your child on the voyage of life, which is likely to be long and prosperous, or short and hapless, according as you give it a wise start—a sound, healthful, physical training. When you rear boys, don't be afraid to have them *real* boys; know that it is natural to them to fish, ride, skate, sled, row, hunt; and so let them do it, in honest company and with wise limitations. Don't be afraid that your girl will be *tomboyish;* if she will coast, and ride, climb, and skate, and run, so much the better: to exercise vigorously is neither rude nor immodest; we get hardy, healthful girls in the same fashion as hardy, healthy boys, and I had much rather see little miss at fourteen jumping a fence, climbing a tree, scaling the roof and riding barebacked, while her cheek knows how to blush at too fixed a gaze, and eyes and ears are not greedily hunting for compliments, than to see her simpering and small-talking, playing the immature flirt with every jacket which comes in sight, her whole soul fixed on the set of her dress and the doing of her hair."

Cousin Ann had quite excited herself on her favorite theme: she paused, smiled, wiped her face, laid by her spectacles and

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her knitting, and stepped into the kitchen to give a careful eye to the supper. Altogether we had all had a most instructive visit.

To my surprise and I must say my gratification I found that my young friends did not yet think themselves perfectly accom plished in regard to conserving and procuring family health, and that they desired yet further information. I received an invita tion to early tea at Mary's, and repairing thither, I found all the young circle there. Indeed, the company was a partnership affair; Miriam and Helen had both contributed to the tea, and lent their help in preparing; Helen had brought Hannah to nurse several of the babies out in the garden, in order to leave the mothers uninterrupted, and Miriam had brought little Ann, whom she had taken from me, to wait on the table. No sooner was I seated in the centre of the group, than Miriam, as speaker for the rest, said:

"Aunt Sophronia, we have been instructed how to keep our houses healthful; we have had much advice as to how to keep our children healthful, and to build up sound bodies for sound minds to inhabit. But even in healthful houses disease makes its appearance, and even the most vigorous children sometimes fall ill. Now, Aunt Sophronia, we shall be poorly off, if we do not know how to meet disease—how to nurse our sick. Instruct us."

"My dear Miriam," I said, "it seems to me that to most sen sible women sick-nursing comes by instinct. It is an instinct which falls to the share of some men, and of most women."

"Instinct is very good," said Miriam, "but reason is better."

"I have seen some women perfectly lost and helpless in a sick-room," remarked Mary.

"I'm afraid I'd be very much in that case!" cried Helen.

"And you know," added some one else, "that even if we are so unusually fortunate as to have little or no sickness in our own families, we should be capable of lending our aid to our friends and neighbors."

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"Indeed," I said, "a woman who cannot wisely do duty in a sick-room is like a woman who has lost her right hand."

"Begin then, Aunt Sophronia," said Miriam, "at the beginning. Let us see to the sick-room first, then to the nurse, then to the patient, then to the medicine and food."

"When you may *choose* a sick-room," I said, "get one as large as possible: crowding, closeness and rustling against things distract a patient. Take this room, as commodious a one as you can find, and have it thoroughly cleaned: white-washed walls are better for it than paper-hangings, and a matting, with rugs, than a carpet. You must place the bed so that the room can be completely ventilated without a draught passing over the bed. A fire-place is a rare treat in a sick-room, ventilating it, removing dampness, and making good cheer; even in a summer sick-room a little wood-fire in a fire-place, morning and evening, would be useful. Dr. Guthrie gives good advice: he says that he exposed himself freely to infectious and contagious diseases in his ministerial duties, and never contracted any illness because he was careful to insist 'on the door being left open while he was in the room, and always took a position between the open door and the patient, and not between the patient and the fire-place.' A nurse cannot keep the door open, but can and should keep the room well aired, protecting her patient from a current of air; and the nurse should be careful and not stand between her patient and the fire."

"What furniture is best for a sick-room?" asked Mary.

"Do not have it crowded; have nothing that will rattle and rustle; have the curtains of some kind of cloth, not shades; have as easy a chair as you can for the patient's sitting up, and with this chair a blanket or quilt, which does *not belong to the bed-furniture*, to wrap over the feet and knees of the invalid while resting in the chair. Have also a footstool or heavy foot cushion: this can be easily manufactured from a box padded

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and covered with carpet; or two circles of wool patchwork may be made, united with a strip of cloth six inches wide, and filled with hay or chaff. Do not let your sick-room be dull: put a picture or two, and a fancy bracket or something pretty, on the walls; have within sight of the bed a stand neatly covered, and furnished with a book or two, an ornament, a vase of flowers, or in winter even, of evergreens, hollies, or dried grasses, something graceful and restful to the eye. I believe in flowers in a sick-room, if there are not so many of them as to load the air with their smell, and if at night they are set outside of the window. Let the bed-clothing be warm enough, perfectly clean, and not too heavy: blankets are better than cotton quilts. See that the washstand is provided with water, towels and all things needful, so that there shall be no annoyance of searching for things, flurrying about, and asking 'how,' 'where,' 'what!' Have a closet-shelf for medicines and all disagreeables of that kind. If there is no closet in the room, or in any part of the furniture, have a box, neatly covered, nailed against the wall, out of the patient's sight, shade it with a little white curtain, and use it as a closet for bottles and spoons. Of all things keep the sick-room neat, quiet and cheerful. Even patients who, when well, are careless and noisy, when ill are sensitive to the disturbance of disorder, and are soothed by neatness and calm."

"I think," said Mary, shutting her eyes, "that I can now see exactly how a comfortable sick-room should look. Now for the nurse."

"One who is taking care of the sick," I continued, "should cultivate self-possession, calmness, quiet cheerfulness, patience, a gentle, soft voice, a tender hand, and the faculty which many characterize as being 'handy'—that is, taking the right thing at the right time—never dropping or knocking over things; also a good memory."

"Who can have so many virtues!" cried Helen.

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"Love will unconsciously instil them all; love, a habit of striving to do well, and a thoughtful watchfulness over self. A nurse should be neat in person, clean and plain in dress; she should never wear a dirty gown, nor a gown which rustles, nor a glaring color, while the more attractive she can make her appearance, in the way of simple good taste, the better will she suit the sick-room. She should not be grim and taciturn, neither a gossip and a chatterbox; she should not admit too many visitors; her authority should be unassuming, and assured. Those who nurse sick children should cultivate the power of telling pleasantly unexciting stories, and should sing softly to the little invalids when they desire it. The nurse should study the duty of 'put yourself in his place;' that is, she should be *sympathetic*, and readily excuse fretfulness, crossness, fears, and other sick nonsense, because these are a part of sickness, and something which, when ill, she might fall into herself. A good nurse must know how to air a room without chilling her patient; she must be skilful to make a bed with the invalid in it, if that invalid cannot be moved; ingenious in airing bed-clothes thoroughly in a short time, and without exposing them to dampness; thoughtful to screen her sleeping patient's eyes from light: to shelter him also from light while sunning the room; quick-handed in bathing and combing, and changing a patient's clothes; very careful to avoid using damp bedding, ill-aired towels, or getting garments of the sick one wet while the toilette is proceeding. A nurse should avoid fretting, bringing bad or exciting news into a sick-room, heavy prognostications, or complaining of the physician in charge, and striving to shake the patient's faith in him. A nurse should know how to sweep a sick-room without raising a dust, and to dress a fire without making a noise. A matting in a sick-room can be well, quietly and easily cleaned, by using a broom with a damp cloth pinned over it; coal can be noiselessly put on a fire by having each handful or so of coals tied up

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EVENING PRAYER.

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in paper, or put into little paper-bags; this is a very valuable precaution where an invalid is very low, or exceedingly sensitive to noise."

"And how shall our nurse treat the patient?" asked Helen.

"She must be kind, forbearing, firm: not leaving the patients the trouble of doing their own thinking, or feeling the responsibility of taking care of themselves. The first thing in the morning the patient has a right to be made comfortable; the bed must be put in order; what bathing is allowed should be done, the hair smoothed; the room aired. It depends on the patient whether this is done before giving the morning meal, or a little food is given first, then the putting in order done, and then the morning meal. A patient's whims should be studied and gratified where they are not harmful; harmful whims should be pleasantly put aside. To some patients one must administer a little firm reasoning. Medicine should be given neatly and in as palatable a way as possible, and the patient should not be irritated by seeing it standing about. All disagreeables should, as far as possible, be kept out of sight."

"And what about this medicine-taking, and running after a doctor all the time?" asked Miriam.

"Generally speaking, there is too much of it. Rules of health are neglected, and then a heavy dose of medicine is expected to set disorganized nature right. The mother disregards a little hoarseness, a complaint of sore throat, a slight chill, a degree of feverishness, and a restless night: the warnings which nature gives of coming ill. No change is made in food, no simple alterative is given, no foot-bath, no external application of simples; the disease grows worse, then heavy doses are given: the doctor is called to rectify somebody's blunders, and there is a long case of sickness. A mother's eye should be quick to note the varying health-tokens in her family, while she should be careful not to be *nervous*, not to fall into a fright at a child's

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sneezing, or sudden pain, or slight feverishness. Some doctors are called day and night to see families where there is nothing the matter but a child's having too late or too solid a supper, or having been allowed too hard a frolic. Every woman of good judgment and of any degree of observation, with a good physician to fall back upon, one whose style of practice she has carefully noted, should be able to treat the simple ailments of her family without fuss, excitement or doctor's help. She should know how to use properly a few simple remedies; she should understand the value of outward applications, of foot-baths, poultices; the virtues of mustard; the efficacy of external applications for sore throat; the use of baths, local or general; the preparation of simple gargles, and she should be able, unalarmed, to bring to bear on a case of illness her common-sense, and the result of her past experience and observation. There are many women who have seen so much of sickness, have read so carefully standard works on nursing and medicine, and have observed so closely the symptoms and developments of ordinary disease, that they very seldom need in their families any skill except their own. And these very skilful persons are, I have observed, those who give the least medicine, and attend most closely to the laws of health, and the work of prevention. I remember years ago I had called at Mrs. Burr's one evening when she was absent. As I sat talking with Mr. Burr, their youngest child woke with an acute attack of croup. 'John,' cried Mr. Burr to the servant, 'run for Mrs. Burr and the doctor: but get Mrs. Burr first.'

"I ventured to say: 'Had you not better call the doctor first?'

"'No,' said he, 'I shall feel twice as safe with Mrs. Burr in the house. She sends for the doctor now and then, but I pin my faith to her, and she's never failed me'

"Sure enough, Mrs. Burr had the child relieved and quite out of danger before the doctor got in. He looked over at her, with a laugh:

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"'O, Mrs. Burr! are you home? Why, then, I might as well have finished the nap I was taking.'

"Once in the winter I spent with Cousin Ann, little Dick came home from school one stormy afternoon, looking very ill; he wheezed, his face was swollen, he shook as with ague, yet burned with fever; he had such a pain in his chest that he was crying, and was so hoarse that he could hardly speak: in this state he had walked a mile in the storm, his feet were soaking wet, and his brother Reed said that Dick had been sick all day. Really he looked desperately ill. Cousin Ann bid Reed remove the child's boots and outer clothing. She set a tub in front of the kitchen fire, put therein a tablespoonful of soda, and a liberal supply of water as hot as Dick could stand. She stripped the little creature, and gave him a thorough hot bath, put on his woollen night-gown, wrapped him in a blanket, and laid him on the lounge, which I wheeled near the fire. She put a hot water bottle at his feet, laid a plaster of flour and mustard on his breast, and one of the same about his neck, gave him a mild dose of physic, gently combed his hair, and laid a cloth wet in vinegar on his aching head. In twenty minutes from his miserable and suffering entrance to his home, Dick, feeling perfectly safe now that he was in his mother's hands, was lying warmly wrapped and comfortably pillowed, his whole aching frame feeling the relief of his hot soda bath. Cousin Ann then quietly cleared away the soiled clothes, the tub and towels, sat down by Dick, sewing in hand, and began to sing him a little song. Before long, his breathing grew easier, and he fell into a deep sleep. Cousin Ann and I then lifted the lounge into the next room where it was warm, and he would not be aroused by the supper-getting. Returning then to the kitchen, she took Reed's case in hand: up to this time she had made no remark to him.

"'Reed, when your little brother seemed ill, why did you not at once bring him home? If he seemed too sick to walk the

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mile, why not have borrowed a conveyance at one of the neigh bors'? Do you not see how cruel and dangerous it was to let him grow worse, and suffer there all day, and then walk home in this storm? It might have sacrificed his life!'

"'Well,' said Reed, 'I did not know that he was so very sick and I did not want to miss my lessons.'

"'It is wise to be on the safe side,' said his mother; an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure; and our pleasures and preferences should always give way to another's pain. Always remember: *never trifle with disease.*'

"In less than a week Dick was as well as ever; but some people in a fright would have put him to bed, and have allowed him to get worse for two hours, while they were sending into town for a doctor, instead of using the simple, common-sense remedies at hand."

By this time in our talk we had reached the tea hour. After tea we had a little discussion about the food for sick people. The substance of our conclusions was as follows: An invalid's food should be prepared and presented with the utmost neatness. A sick person is more fastidious than a well person; he eats with his eyes as much as with his mouth; he will take his gruel out of a china bowl, when he would reject it slovenly presented in a tin-cup. Do not present a patient too much food at once; a large quantity will disgust, where a small amount will tempt a sickly taste. Let the food be presented attractively, spread a clean napkin on the tray, and use as nice and as small dishes as you can, and add, if possible, a spray of flowers; the capricious invalid, needing food, yet indifferent to it, will eat what is thus brought, "because it looks so pretty." If the case is in charge of a physician, carefully follow his orders in regard to food; if you are both nurse and doctor, use your common-sense, and give food light and easy of digestion, palatable and varied in quantity and quality as convalescence progresses. Every woman

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should know how to prepare gruel, beef-tea, mutton-broth, toast, toast-water, panada, chicken-soup, a bit of broiled fowl or steak, and the various other dainties and necessities of the sick-room. When you poach an egg for your invalid do it nicely; do not make it hard as a bullet, with edges ragged and streaming, but turn the white skilfully over the yolk until it is a smooth oblong, lightly cooked; lift it carefully with your skimmer until it is well drained; sprinkle on the centre a little salt and pepper; lay it on four or five green leaves, parsley, if you have them—if not, on two or three celery or carrot leaves; have ready a diamond-shaped piece of toast, of an even brown, and carry up both *hot* on a white-covered tray: if you have a spray of honey-suckle, a rose or a cluster of violets to lay between your two dishes, so much the better.

When you bake an apple for an invalid, don't have it burnt on one side and burst open on the other; prick the skin and bake it thoroughly and evenly. Don't send your patient back the same bit of butter with, perhaps, a knife-mark on it, or the same spoonful of jelly in a smeared dish: a few dishes more or less to wash are nothing compared to the invalid's comfort. When you hear of a nice rice, sago or tapioca pudding for an invalid, write the recipe in some little note-book dedicated to cookery for the sick, and then using such a book you will be able to keep up a variety in cooking for your patient, and sick people need variety more than well people. Don't keep an invalid waiting long for a meal, until they are tired, cross, and past their appetite. Don't bring up the tea or coffee and forget the sugar, or furnish the pudding and then go to hunt a spoon, and so have the dish lukewarm when eaten. Consult your patient's tastes, and don't forget to season nicely when you cook. Be so neat that the wary patient will have no suspicions of your cookery.

"Once when I was ill," said Helen, "nothing would tempt me to eat. The doctor was quite worried about it; but eat I could

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not, no matter what was presented. One afternoon Hannah brought up 'a present from Mrs. Winton.' The present was in a napkin of rose-colored damask; I unpinned the corners, and there was a little fancy basket, and in the basket a French china bowl, with something in it snow-white with little flecks of green, and in the middle of this 'something' a tiny bouquet stood up, made of a pale blue hyacinth and a tea-rose; across the bowl lay a silver fork, so all was ready for me to taste the 'something.' The lovely pink damask, the dainty basket, the fragrant flowers, beguiled me to taste what was in the bowl: it was a delicious salad. After one taste I told Hannah to bring me a slice of bread, and I made my supper at once of the bread and salad; my appetite was restored from that time."

"We must have the recipe for that famous salad," cried Miriam, "and put it in our Sick Cookery Books."

"It is as good for well folks as for the sick," said Helen; "and you may copy the recipe for that and two other salads out of my Household Book whenever you choose."

The young people all agreed that they had learned a good deal about sick-nursing, and had had a very pleasant visit.

As I found that the recipes, to which Helen referred, would suggest a fine addition to a tea-table, or to a convalescent's bill of fare, I shall add them to this discussion of nursing.

Salad Dressing.—Boil an egg very hard. *Mash* the yolk and chop fine the white. Put in a bowl the mashed yolk, one teaspoon white sugar, one-half teaspoon salt, one teaspoon mustard, one tablespoon olive oil, two or three tablespoons vinegar, according to size of salad; mix well. Stir this dressing well through the salad; pile the salad in a mound on a platter; put the chopped egg-white over the top; set a wreath of celery leaves around the edge of the dish; make a small bouquet of any flowers or green things for the centre. For a tea-party in spring, a heavy violet wreath for the edge and a violet cluster in the centre is

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an improvement; in the fall, little plum tomatoes cut in halves and laid on the leaves at the edge is a fine addition to the dish.

The Salad.—Peel or scrape six large Irish potatoes. Soak in salt water for an hour or so; boil until barely done; let them get cold. Chop these potatoes fine; chop several stems of celery; a little parsley; a circle of onion and a circle of pepper-pod may be added if desired; with or without the celery, bleached turnip-tops chopped fine; mix the potatoes and chopped salad, also half a small head of fine-chopped lettuce; stir well into this the above dressing, and serve as directed. The chopped potatoes alone thus dressed make a good salad, when other materials are not procurable; or use one-half chopped potatoes and one-half chopped roast beef.

A Meat Salad.—Chop beef or mutton very fine. Mix with above salad dressing. Cut and butter thin rounds of bread; spread evenly on these the dressed meat; lay on each a thin round of lemon, and a leaf of parsley under the edge of the slice of lemon. Put these meat slices on a platter, and lay a small bouquet in the centre—a delightful and beautiful tea-dish.

In cooking for the sick take particular care not to scorch or smoke the food; avoid all greasiness, and never *fry* an invalid's food. Meat for a sick person should be broiled or steamed. We hear many complaints of tough meat, but there is scarcely any beef-roast so obdurate as not to prove tender, and well flavored, if roasted as follows:

Take a stone pot, a round pot of the same size in its whole height, and without a neck, the top being entirely open: it must be low enough to stand in the oven. Rinse the meat, remove any very large bones, and gash a little with a sharp knife; put the meat into the pot—if closely crowded, it is all the better; sprinkle it well with salt, pepper, and a little ground cloves; pour over it a cup of catsup, tomato catsup being the best; put on a close lid; if the pot has no lid, lay a pie-plate upon it.

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and put a brick on the plate to hold it down firmly. Allow no water in the pot, and no escape of steam while the roasting progresses. Have an oven as for bread, and roast four or five hours, according to the size of the piece of meat. Meat thus cooked will be exceedingly tender and juicy: none of its flavor will have escaped, and it is equally good used hot or cold, while for making sandwiches it is unrivalled. That it may be of a handsome shape when served, it is well, before putting it in the pot to roast, to coil it into a round, and tie it with a piece of tape.

I wrote these recipes in Miriam's Household Book; as I was returning it to its shelf, a bit of paper fell out. It was written by her doctor, and Miriam said she had forgotten to copy it, and must do so at once. As she was nursing one of her children, I copied it for her. The paper was upon that great trial of many: *Sleeplessness.* Thus: If you are troubled by Sleeplessness, do not set yourself to counting, composing, or reciting; as a general thing, this will excite the brain to an activity which will defy sleep; to attain sleep, the mind should be restful. The cause of Sleeplessness is usually an excited state of the nerves; a simple method of calming these is to bathe the head, neck and arms in cold water, and rub briskly with a towel, immediately before retiring; this secures action to the skin, and aids materially in producing a calm, sleepy feeling. Nervous excitement, producing wakefulness, is often a product of indigestion; a remedy for this is: wring out a towel from cold water, fold it, lay it upon the stomach, and fold a dry towel, or a large piece of flannel, over it, cross the arms lightly over it, and soon a delightful warmth and glow will send you off to sleep. Another method of persuading rest when wakeful is: to rise, rub the arms, chest and feet briskly with a coarse towel or a flesh-brush; a more effectual fashion, especially on warm nights, would be to bathe the arms and soak the wrists in cold water. A small towel, or

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a handkerchief, may be wrung out of cold water, and wrapped on the left wrist, and covered with a dry towel: the fast and feverish pulse soon calms, and sleep succeeds.

These are all simple, easy suggestions, and I made a note of them for my own use; although having a well-aired room, no light, a mattress and not feathers to sleep on, keeping regular hours, taking sufficient exercise, and eating a light supper, I am not often troubled by wakefulness. A *habit* of wakefulness is very disastrous, and we should use every effort to guard against it; if we find ourselves wakeful at night, we should seek after the cause, and strive to avoid repeating it, not only for comfort's sake, but for the sake of the soundness of our minds, the vigor of our bodies, and the efficiency of our work during the day Sleep is one of the good gifts of God:

> "So he giveth his beloved sleep.
> So he giveth his beloved in sleep.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE BEAUTY OF THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA TELLS HOW TO MAKE HOME ATTRACTIVE.

I REMEMBER telling my niece Miriam before her marriage, that good housekeeping builds up the walls of Home. In the building of houses I have observed that once the walls are up, some sort of finish is put upon them: they are painted, papered, calcimined or white-washed. Then, in furnishing a house, people generally place pictures, ornaments or brackets upon the walls. So I think that if good housekeeping builds up the walls of Home, good taste, a thing closely allied to good housekeeping, gives them the finishing touch and makes the Home beautiful. In my opinion the Beauty of the Home is a very important matter. There are a few people who pass it by as "nonsense," say they "have no time for it," and that they must "spend their efforts on what has a cash value;" being narrow-minded, or near-sighted, they do not perceive that Beauty in a home has a very decided cash value. I say this, first, because if we cultivate Beauty in the Home, we produce there greater care and better and more cheerful spirits, consequently better health, and therefore less outlay for sickness, besides having more effective working-force. Again, a Home, in village or country, where Beauty is created, possesses a higher market value. A Home where an outlay of care, a little labor and forethought has created beauty in the shape of smooth hard walks, neat sodding near the house, a flower garden, shade trees, rows of fruit trees, grapes, flowering

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vines, a post or two draped in roses and honeysuckles, with a bird-house a-top, a little arbor or summer house—these things, created in summer evenings after working hours, in winter leisure time, in early mornings, noon-rests, or on holidays, lend an air of refinement to the whole establishment, directly and indirectly tend toward the good order of the whole, give it a higher market value and would secure a purchaser more quickly if it were for sale. In another regard the culture of Beauty in a Home is of immense value. A growing family will be much more likely to remain cheerfully in a Beautiful Home, even if that beauty is extremely simple and inexpensive. A family who are home-keepers are an inexpensive family. Sons and daughters do not waste their money at home: they are tempted into rash outlays when they are in the company of strangers, hanging about public places and striving to vie with those who have either no need of saving, or no honest desire to do so.

I hear so much complaint that farmers' sons and daughters do not want to stay at home—they "hate the farm"—want other business; the girls had rather be mantua-makers or store-clerks, than be at home helping their mothers, making butter, and raising fruits and vegetables; the sons want to try their fortunes in the city; the parents find themselves, when their children are old enough to be efficient help, left to hired servants, who have little care to aid them in making and saving money, who are no company indoors, and, meanwhile, the parental heart is burdened with fears and anxieties for the absent children, and possibly the parental purse is burdened with their business failures.

I was at tea at Mrs. Winton's the other day, with Mr. and Mrs. Burr and some others, and Mr. Winton said:

"We shall have constantly recurring 'panics' and 'crashes' and 'hard times' until our people learn that the tilling of the soil is the true source of wealth; that golden corn above the

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ground is really of more value to the country than the gold in the earth; that the soil of our country has abundance for all her children; it is a mother who never for bread offers a stone. When the immigrants who come to us shall be agriculturists; when our emigrants and our moving Eastern population seek the West for farms, and not for gold or silver claims; when instead of our rural population crowding to the cities in a mad zeal for speculation and hasty fortunes, which, in ninety-nine cases out of an hundred, are fortunes as quickly lost as made; when every acre of land in our farming districts is made to produce to its fullest capacity, and not left lying in marsh, or barren, or scrub for years, *then* we shall be a solidly wealthy people—these great financial convulsions and crises which have kept us in a state of fever and excitement will be unknown."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Burr, "our farming and arable lands are capable of producing a far greater amount than they do at present; diligent cultivation, rotation of crops, and care not to exhaust the land for the sake of a hasty cash return, would bring our crops up to a value thus far quite unknown in this country. Consider what a population the small country of Palestine once supported: over nine millions of people in an extent of less than ten thousand square miles—that is, about the size of the State of New Hampshire. Egypt was the grain-house of the world, besides supporting over twenty thousand towns and villages, ten very great cities, of which one was twenty miles in circumference. The valley of the Euphrates around Babylon formerly produced two hundred-fold for seed sown. I believe if land is well tilled and cropped according to its nature, there is absolutely no limit to its power of production. If the population, which is now swarming in our cities and towns, fretting in poverty and idleness, nursing communism and breeding disease, would pour out as workers into the country, filling it so that swamps *must be* drained, and dry wastes irrigated, and hills ter-

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raced for grapes, and that barrens *must be* cleared off, in behalf of crops of corn, melons and sweet-potatoes, and the woods *must be* cleared of underbrush, and set to growing large timber—then we should find a reign of plenty, and all our present beggars might be on horseback, at least while they were tilling their fields and driving their market-wagons."

"Instead of that rush *to* the country," said I, "the rush is away from it; the young folks think they must go to town as soon as they are grown. Every one wonders why and how Cousin Ann's three boys have stayed on farms."

"I think," said Mrs. Burr, "that one reason of that restless haste to leave the farm is owing to a neglect of making the farm and the farm-house attractive. So many of these homesteads have a lonely, desolate look. No trees, no flowers, a neglect of a little ingenuity in making a pretty porch and fence for the house-front, an over-carefulness which refuses to open the front rooms for the use of the family, a neglect of making the bed-rooms neat and pretty—things get a sameness and shabbiness, and young eyes pine for something more attractive."

"There is that same error, as far as I can see, in villages and towns and cities," said Mrs. Winton. "A great many people pile all the agreeable things which they have into one or two rooms, which they keep shut up for apocryphal visitors. The family sitting-room and the bed-rooms are bare and forbidding."

"And then," replied Mrs. Burr, "the young folks go to visit their neighbors, or out into the streets, and look at the store-windows, and so try to compensate themselves; whether they know what they want or not, all youth craves beauty: it is a natural desire."

"But what a pity," I said, "that young folks should not find what they crave in the safety of their own homes! What an anchorage for good faith and virtue is the love of an honest, pure home! What a stay to a child in all his life, the memory

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of a home beautiful, upright and loving! and by *beautiful* I do not mean the beauty which is created by money, in velvet carpets, rosewood furniture, fine ornaments and pictures. Those are all very well when they fall to our lot, but the beauty which I mean can be created anywhere, and out of almost anything, by simple good taste. I think that care to make the Home attractive is the secret of the farming tastes of Cousin Ann's boys. And what a comfort those tastes have been to their parents! Reed and Fred are on farms beside their father's, Dick is with his father, and little Jack is not likely to wish to go away. What anxieties have they all been spared, what temptations, what losses, by these home tastes!"

"I was a little boy," said Mr. Burr, "when Reuben and Cousin Ann, as young married people, moved to that farm. I used to think it was the barest-looking place on earth. An old broken-down fence, no paths, no porch, no shade, no garden; there was the land, the barns and sheds, a straight wooden house, and some field fences. They moved there in the fall. Cousin Reuben, as we all call him now, spent a good deal of that winter in his wood-lot, cutting and hauling wood, for himself and for sale, and on top of his loads we schoolboys saw him bringing home all manner of queer-looking and shaped sticks. The old yard fence was turned into kindling wood. I remember how that place changed, not by money outlay, for they had a mortgage to pay off, but by constant industry and good sense. Cousin Reuben and Ann worked away at that front yard, and around the house, every summer evening for years. Those queer sticks grew in two years into a handsome rustic fence. Reuben built with his own hands a porch, an arbor for grape vines, and a summer house; in the winter evenings he made bird-houses, and poles for creepers; Cousin Ann got slips, cuttings and seeds; to give her a bit of good shrubbery was to give her a treasure, and Reuben carried from the field and wood promising young shade and ornamental trees. Look what a place they have now!"

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"Yes, I remember. Cousin Ann told me she meant her children should not grow up in such a desolate place as that was when she found it; and she thought they would love and value it more, if they helped to create beauty there. She had them from their earliest childhood learn to help keep the place neat, and make improvements in it. They helped her in the vegetable garden; they planted and weeded flower borders; no old barrel-hoops rotted on the ground there: they were used for fences to the garden bed, and for frames for vines. The boys made rustic seats, they learned to turn common things to use, they made brackets and picture-frames. Every one helped to make every one's room pretty, and no part of the house was too good for the family. The parents took a pride in making the house nice, and the children learned an equal pride in keeping it nice. I never saw such children to avoid making a litter, and such care in preserving furniture. They liked to sit in the best room when there was no company; they enjoyed it for themselves; and, boys and girls, they would set to work just before going to bed, or very early in the morning, and sweep, dust and polish it up, so that the use of it should not increase their mother's work. Why if those boys undertook to go far from home, they would be going from a place which they had *made*, from what was a pleasant share and part of their own life-work. They learned carpentry on rainy days, out in the barn, making stools and stands, shelves and shutters for their rooms."

"Well," said Mr. Winton, "the whole county knows that they are a wonderful set of boys."

"They had a wonderful mother, to begin with," said Mrs. Burr. "And every mother may be just as wonderful, who sets her common-sense and energy to work for her family—who trains her children's activity to constructiveness and usefulness, instead of to riot and mischief. What boy will not prize the home which he helped make, which was free to him in all its

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best things, which gave him his interests and occupied his thoughts? What boy won't take a pride in making things, when even his first exploit in making a stool—a stool a little shaky in the legs, and a little uneven in height—is cordially received with—'That is very nice. I have some cloth which will make it a splendid cover; I think I would cut that leg about half an inch shorter, and you had better put a nail in here, and one here. Then this evening we will cover it in red and black, and you can have it in your own room.'"

"Yes," said Mr. Burr; "the value of that home, of its attractiveness and beauty, has been unspeakable to those boys, but it has also brought its cash return. Even a hired hand could not be careless in a place so beautifully kept, so cheerful, so pretty as that was. The beauty of the house, like the gleam of a lamp, widened out over the whole farm. Where are fences straighter, walls truer, fields smoother, clumps of trees and single fine trees left to better advantage? Where is every bit of rubbish so gathered up and put to use? What increased value per acre has not that farm gained from the beautiful hedges near the front—hedges planted and trimmed by the boys—from the choice shrubbery, from the grapes and small fruits, from the shade before the house, the porches and arbors, the fine flowers, and that unsurpassed vegetable garden? If Cousin Reuben hinted at selling he'd get a dozen high offers. But he knows too much to put that place in market; he will keep it to make Dick and Jack rich."

It is now two years since Hester married. As she said she should do, she chose a scholar, a scientific man, often off on long tours in government service. Hester usually goes with him. They live at John Rocheford's, and John is perfectly satisfied. Hester keeps the house. The phrases "wax-work" and "clock-work," as applied to the niceness and the running order of that house, do not in my view express its perfection; somehow she

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QUEEN OF ROSES.

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seems to manage the place even when she is gone. I was sitting with Hester for an hour the very day after this visit at Mrs. Winton's, and I happened to tell her of our conversation about Beauty in a Home.

"What you say about good taste creating beauty from small resources," said Hester, "is quite true. I remember a case in point. There was at school with me a young girl whose room was one of the most beautifully arranged in the building, though, as she was poor, she had no money to spend on it, and no ornaments which cost money. A pot of growing ferns, a wreath of pressed fall leaves, a basket made of pine cones, a bracket curiously fashioned of lichen-covered sticks, a bouquet of dried grasses, burrs and seed pods of autumn flowers, lent a charm to the little plain room. Beauty seemed to grow under her fingers; she had such perfect order, such neatness, so many useful contrivances, that her room served as a model for all the rest. She married a home missionary. I was at her simple wedding, and helped her pack her trunks. She had very little to take with her for the furnishing of her home, yet I felt certain it would be beautiful. I remember that she had in one of her boxes a large bundle of fragments of cloth and worsted stuffs, and that she, rather to my surprise, purchased at an auction some remnants of paper cambric, chintz and coarse Swiss muslin; they were very cheap, but I wondered why she chose them. Last summer, when I went with my husband to the Rocky Mountains, we passed within ten miles of my friend's Western home, and I took a day to drive over to see her, being also the bearer of some gifts from her schoolmates. The house was an unpainted wooden building, and only one floor had a carpet; but, as I expected, the little place breathed good taste, and was beautiful. She had trained vines over doorway and windows: the chintz which I had despised made ruffled lambrequins for the windows. She laughingly said she had furnished her house with dry goods

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boxes. Sure enough, two such boxes covered with chintz made a pair of pretty divans; the bed-rooms had dainty toilette tables made of other dry goods boxes, draped in the Swiss muslin over the colored cambric. The bundle of woollen fragments had turned into mats and footstool covers; she had converted a barrel into a sewing-chair, and another into a work-table. In truth, the little four-roomed house was the tasteful home of a *lady*, and the little shed kitchen in the rear was so clean, so handily arranged, that she need never blush to invite any one into it. I never realized so completely the creative power of good taste. Her husband had put a pine board for a mantel in their sitting-room, but she had hidden this and a bracket to match with a cover of oriental work, which was really elegant, and on these she had placed the vases and other souvenirs which her schoolmates gave her at parting, and with the fresh wild flowers in the vases, they lent the room the charm of elegance. I well knew where she got *time* for fitting up things: she is one of those who rest by change of work, and who *save* the moments that other people waste."

This subject of Beauty in the Home became a favorite theme of mine, and it happened that we had it pretty thoroughly discussed once, when Helen, Miriam, Cousin Ann, her daughter Sarah, and myself, were invited to take tea with Hester. It was in the autumn, and Hester had spent the preceding day with Cousin Ann, and with Sarah had been searching "winter ornaments."

"Did you get holly, juniper and bryony-vine?" asked Miriam.

"No," said Sarah: "we always leave those for Christmas, but we got grasses of various kinds, and silk-weed pods, and sticks covered with lichens, and branches of pine-cones; if one has a quick eye in selecting, you can gather in fall fadeless winter bouquets which are as beautiful as summer bouquets. I got a large round of thick green moss, and some squawberry-vines mingled with it, and a delicate little fern to plant right in the

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centre; with a pine-burr and a couple of striped snail-shells it has made a lovely ornament for the middle of our dining-table."

"For my part," said Cousin Ann, "my meals always taste better for a bouquet, or a moss-plate, or a pot of fern in the middle of the table. In summer we use fresh flowers. It does not take long to gather a few and put them in a little vase or glass, and it cheers the whole family up to see them. The men come in hot and tired, and the very look of a pretty table comforts them; father and the boys often say just to see the pot of flowers and the shining white cloth is better than a meal in some houses."

"Reed's wife," said Sarah, "got that idea from mother, and she has made a pretty centre-piece for her table—just a common red earthen flower-pot, a five-cent one, with a thrifty fern in it, and a round of moss filling the top of the pot around the fern stem; then on each side of the pot she put a picture, and the pot stands in a saucer, so that it will not soil the table; the pictures on the pot were two pretty ones from a fruit-can, and when they were varnished, you have no idea how nicely the thing looked."

"I tried a bouquet for my tea-table, but it got upset so often, between the children and the servants, that I gave it up," remarked Helen.

"Manage it as I do, then, Helen," said Hester; "our gas-fixture is just over the centre of the table, and I made a net of crystal beads; the net just held a goblet which had been broken from the stem; that goblet I fill with water and keep my flowers and vines in that. They set off the table as well as if they stood on it."

"I'm glad you mentioned that," said Mary Watkins, "for though we have no gas we have a hanging light; my husband put a hook in the ceiling and hung a lamp by little chains, for

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fear Nettie might pull a table lamp over. I shall tie a little willow basket with a dish in it to that, and have a vine in it; I have wanted something of the kind, only I could not keep it out of Nettie's reach. I do love to see a nice, tasteful table for meals."

"Well," said Cousin Ann, "if you'll take care to have a clean, well-ironed cloth, and a bit of something bright for a centre-piece, and lay the dishes neatly, and have the forks and knives bright, you will find that such a table is a great sweetener of the family temper; it makes a very homely meal seem like a feast, and children can hardly show ill manners before what is so refining. Don't forget: these little things tell on the children."

"The table-cloths are a deal of trouble," said Mary: "they get rumpled so very soon."

"It pays in washing and ironing, in soap and time, to put a little starch in them," said Cousin Ann; "iron them in small folds, and press them hard; turn the folds back and forth like the leaves of a book, not over and over, like wrapping a bundle. As soon as the cloth is shaken, or brushed off with a clean wing or a table-brush, fold it in the original folds, lay it in a drawer, or keep a pasteboard box of the right size for the cloth alone, and on top of the cloth lay a stone of exactly the same size, or a slab of marble; if you can't get either, have a little board with a brick on it; there's always some way to get along if one is bent *on* getting along. Take first-rate care of the table-cloth, a tidy cloth is half the meal, to my mind."

"And there's the little matter of trimming dishes," said Miriam; "some plain dish, or something cooked over, looks and tastes so nicely with a little trimming. I never saw such a person as Mrs. Winton for that. If she boils a ham or a leg of mutton, she trims the bone end with a ruffle of white paper cut in narrow strips and curled on the scissors; the pepper is put on in round spots, and either cloves or parsley-leaves are stuck in

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here and there; the thing becomes beautiful. She has a plate of cold sliced meat, and around the edge of the dish is a wreath of parsley or celery-leaves, and a few slices of lemon are laid on the meat. Does she have a dish of stewed meat, a wall of mashed-potato surrounds the platter, the stew goes inside, and the whole is trimmed with diamond-shaped bits of carrot and beet; if she has for dinner a plate of codfish and potatoes mashed together, they are piled in a mound, furrowed, and garnished with green leaves and slices of hard-boiled egg. Hard-boiled eggs get to her table in a bed of green leaves; and a plate of sandwiches is topped with a bouquet; she makes beauty and poetry out of everything."

"Yes," remarked Cousin Ann, "there is no truer economy than a little good taste; you can afford to economize if you can make your cooked-over dishes look handsomer than most people's first-hand dishes."

"Some people think," I suggested, "that they cannot set a handsome table unless they are rich enough for French china, plenty of silver and the finest damask, but some of the best-looking tables I ever sat it, cost very little money. I'd know our minister's table anywhere I saw it, by some pretty little napkins his wife has; they are laid over the bread, over the cake, over a plate of sandwiches or buns, and they are the daintiest little things! She cuts a yard of bird's-eye linen into eight even pieces, fringes out each piece half an inch deep, overstitches evenly with red working-cotton to keep it from ravelling further, and then coral-stitches a border, or works a sheaf of wheat, or her own initial in the centre with red cotton: she says they last for years, and they set off her table wonderfully. She is fond of a centre-piece for her table, and she has a dwarf fern growing in a large conch shell: it is a very charming thing."

"All the ornamenting that I have tried," said Mary, "is to have parlor-ivy and some other little vines growing in bottles of

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water behind my glasses and pictures, and they succeed very well: I must accomplish something further."

"Many people," I remarked, "seem to think that we can secure beauty only by profuse money outlay—that beauty is in the ratio of expense. On the contrary, beauty is largely independent of expense. The least handsome parlor that I ever saw was a very expensive one—not a book or engraving to be seen. Staring, ill-painted family portraits, which had cost a good price, deformed the walls. It was early summer, and the garden had plenty of flowers, but not one was in the parlor; instead, silver vases of wax monstrosities and porcelain baskets of wax fruit; a gaudy assertion of superabundant dollars and deficient good taste was the characteristic of the room. Natural objects confer more beauty on a room than artificial ones: shells, flowers, vines are far superior for ornament to china figures and card-board work; indeed, I consider work on card-board the least beautiful of any kind of ornament, and I would it were banished, for it consumes much time, and is very dangerous to the eyesight. If one knows how to blend and contrast colors, has the good taste not to banish *books* from a room, can train a vine of ivy, make a moss plate, and pile up artistically a handful of shells, or make a rose-lipped conch the receptacle of a cluster of primroses, violets or hyacinths, they will have beauty in their rooms."

"I am glad," said Mary, "that to procure beauty I am not to be obliged to make much fancy work, for with my housework and sewing, I have little time, and my eyes are not very strong."

"We seem," said Hester, "to be talking about beauty, and not about eyes; but what advantage is beauty unless we have eyes? So perhaps I shall not interrupt our discourse, if I suggest to Mary how to care for her eyes. First, don't read or work *lying down:* it strains the eyes by using them at an unnatural angle; don't use them on print or work so fine as to make

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them feel strained in the use. When they burn, smart or seem dim, rest them, if it is only for five minutes, by looking at other things or closing them, and by bathing them in cold water. Always bathe them freely in *cold* water, never in hot or warm water; don't sleep, sit or work with the light falling full on your eyes: let it fall over your shoulder upon the book or work; have your sleeping-room *dark*, no lamp-light; and grand final instruction, just before going to bed, bathe your *eyes*, behind your *ears*, the back of your *neck* and the top of your head, with cold water, *plentifully*, and do the same the first thing in the morning; thus you reach and strengthen the nerves communicating with the eye, and you will be almost sure, by observing these rules, to preserve your eyesight, and to strengthen it if it is feeble."

"I have heard," said Helen, "that it is very good to bathe the eyes in cold tea."

"If you use black tea, then, as you are sure there is no poisonous color in it, if you use it cold, the tea being cold and a gentle astringent *may* be beneficial; but I never like to try on my eyes anything but cold water, and plenty of it."

"The cold water bathing night and morning," I said, "if accompanied by a hearty rubbing with a coarse towel, is not only good for the eyes, but is almost a sure preventive of colds in the head, influenza and catarrh. A person who uses thus water, of the temperature of the air, summer and winter, is little likely to take cold. I have even recommended this remedy to those who seemed suffering with a chronic cold, or a close succession of bad colds, and they found the cold cured and no others followed it. The heads and throats of children should be thus bathed, and well rubbed, night and morning, to prevent sore throat, croup and kindred troubles. Nothing is more ineffectual for these disorders than housing up children. Let them be used to cold water, well wrapped, and then let them run."

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At the tea-table we resumed our conversation on Beauty in the Home: a theme from which we had drifted to questions of health. Hester made some remarks which I liked very much She said:

"The pursuit of Beauty is not to be esteemed a whim belonging to a delicate rather than a strong brain. It is not a condescension of the intellect, not the by-play of vigor, not a trifle on the surface of things—it is in man's mind a reflection cast by the mind of the Creator, who made man in his own image. Hugh Miller, in his 'Schools and Schoolmasters,' suggests that wherever man pursues either utility or beauty, he takes a path where God has gone before him; and even in so small a matter as painting the panels of a coach, he will find that he has followed 'nature's geometric signs,' and combined the hues and contrasted the colors, as God, in bird, or flower, or insect, painted them long before."

We all concluded that we could not do better than follow in the footsteps of such lofty authority, and cultivate Beauty as heartily as possible.

In considering the subject of Beauty in the Home, several points have struck me. First, there can be no real beauty without neatness and order. A stand of plants in fine bloom may be an object of beauty in a room, but it cannot create beauty over a dirty or ragged carpet. Good engravings are also conducive to beauty; but if the husband hangs good pictures on the walls, and the wife litters the whole room with the threads and scraps from her sewing machine, the pleasing is lost to the eye in the unpleasing. Parents should make their children full sharers in the best things of Home; but at the same time the children should be taught to prize and maintain the beauty of their home. Their sports and manufactures, which are rough, noisy and productive of dirt, should be kept in some place apart, and they should be encouraged to bring their books, their

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clean, quiet games, their drawing, where their parents and elder friends are; thus family companionship will be secured, without provoking that untidiness which is incompatible with beauty.

Second. I should say that true beauty does not belong to things showy and insubstantial. Some people get cheap, showy furniture and carpets, thinking that as it is cheap they can afford more of it; while the truth is that the more of it the worse it looks, and that a few good things are far better than a good many poor ones. When we must get cheap things because we have but little money, then let them be very plain: for nothing is uglier than cheap gilding. If we have plain things which do not cost much, then the value has been put into the material and making, and they are likely to last a long time without failing in appearance; while if the things are showy and cheap, the money has gone for paint and gilding, which will soon tarnish and crack off, the wood will warp, the glue prove treacherous, and our possessions will be a wreck. A look of substantial comfort and rest, welcomes you to a room, and gives the impression of beauty. When you give up the idea of costliness and fine display, take comfort for your aim. The little money which would buy cheap shades, a varnished table, a narrow, stiff little hair-cloth sofa, will pay ten times as well in use and beauty, invested in *good* chintz for a lounge and chair-cushions, and for lambrequins to the windows, and a good cloth for a common table; or have your curtains of white or pale-hued lawn, and buy lady's cloth for your table-cover, and embroider the edge in oriental work of some kind. Speaking of furniture, children should not be allowed to treat it with disrespect; they will be just as happy in proudly helping to take care of it, as in destroying it. There is not beauty in a room where children have daubed the floor and table-cover with paste and ink; where they have stood on the chair-seats and sofas or lounges, until the covers are rent or faded; where they

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have kicked the chair-rungs, and table-legs, and base-boards until they are all dents and scratches. Let them learn not to stand on upholstery. If they must paint or paste in these rooms, it is small trouble to teach them to spread a large newspaper over the table-cover or carpet, where they are at work; let them have their own chairs and stools fit for their size, and then the tired little legs dangling in mid-air will not be tempted to grind varnish from adjacent furniture.

Third. In pursuit of beauty and ornament, don't crowd: nothing is more beautiful than breathing room and space to turn around safely. Walls *covered* with frames, brackets, autumn leaves and the like, look patchy: we must not try to turn our homes into museums or picture galleries; disgust accompanies surfeit of the eye as well as of the stomach, and there is an old story that "enough is as good as a feast," may-be better in its results.

Fourth. When we seek Beauty for our Home, let us remember that every human soul has to some degree a capacity for beauty; that what is the choice life of our own Home, flourishes well in other Homes. If we love beauty for itself, we shall desire to disseminate it wherever we go—to widen its refining reign in the world. We shall consider first, that Beauty in our own homes is not to be confined to our own parlor or bed-room, or to our children's and guests' rooms; our servants should be made sharers in it. The kitchen, because it *is* a kitchen, is not beyond the influence of Beauty: when we reflect how really beautiful some farm kitchens are, we may conclude that village and town kitchens may be made beautiful in their degree, even though they do not open on clover fields in bloom,on sweet, old-fashioned gardens, where hollyhocks tower over currant bushes, and hop vines wave tasselled banners in the breeze. Then there are our servants' rooms: how often have I heard mistresses complain that the maids kept their room so untidy! Did the

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mistress try to beautify it? Did she encourage the maid to keep it nicely? The bed is left unmade? Well, were the bed-clothes whole and clean, with a decent outside spread, or were they worn-out rubbish, too bad for any others of the family to use? Was there a little curtain to the window, a bit of carpet by the bed, a stand neatly covered for lamp, Bible, bouquet, or any of the girl's little treasures? Were there hooks for the clothes, and was there any attempt to ornament the walls? Would the Home have been poorer for a picture or two, a comb-basket, and a wall-pocket? If we cultivate Beauty in our Homes, let us do it thoroughly, and let all share in it.

Again, if we have any new or good ideas of increasing the Beauty of a Home, let us not be chary of sharing our wisdom with our friends and neighbors; let us be glad to help make other homes beautiful. And when we are visiting the sick and poor, let us remember that somewhere in their hearts, dormant, may-be, or benumbed under many rebuffs, is the love of Beauty, and let us try and revive it, and shed a little of its light on their paths. It will be to many medicine to mind and body. I recall a case here in point. I had a protégée, a poor humpbacked girl, very weakly, confined to her invalid chair in a little bed-room opening from a larger place occupied by her mother, who took in washing, and her father, who cobbled shoes. She was a nice girl, and labored painfully at knitting, to help earn her living. I had helped the poor family get these two rooms, which were well sunned and capable of being well aired. Helen had given the invalid a bit of carpet and a white curtain, and Miriam had bestowed on her some bedding; we all helped her get work, and now and then sent her soup, biscuits, a paper, or a book. I left home for six weeks, and requested Hester to look after Margaret during my absence. When I went to visit my charge on my return, I found her whole room brighter, her face brighter, and her health better by far; she seemed to have a new interest in things. Presently she said:

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"Do look at my window—isn't it *beautiful?* Mrs. Nugent showed me how to fix all those things one day while I was sick, and now when I feel very badly I have only to look at those growing things, and I forget my troubles; you see I did the work myself, and it has been so lovely to see the change!"

A glass fruit-jar hung in the centre of the window by a red cord; in this was a sweet potato, filling the jar with white roots, and sending down outside delicate vines. On either side hung by cords a carrot and a turnip turned *upside down*, hollowed into little baskets, and filled with water; they had sent out a fine leafage, and were globes of green. A shallow raisin-box stood on the window-sill; it was filled with earth, and here the sick girl had planted seeds, and set a bulb and a slip or two, *herself*, and rejoiced to watch them grow. She had cut common pictures from the papers and pasted them on the box, and it really looked very well. Hester had also given her some bits of silk and merino, and shown her how to make herself a knitting-bag, a pin-cushion, a pair of wall-pockets in which to keep the various little things which she needed, and which had hitherto encumbered her room.

"Don't I look nice!" she cried, leaning back with a sigh of satisfaction; "why, I feel almost well, making and enjoying these things: it is far prettier work than knitting, and Mrs. Nugent says if I become handy at it, perhaps she can find some shop where they will take a basket of my work to sell."

I took a lesson from that of the power of beauty, of variety and of new interests, over the sick and poor. But all that is external has its chief value as it affects the internal, and the great value of the cultivation of Beauty in our Homes is that it tends to soften and refine the manners, make the heart innocently busy and happy, and encourage a Love of Home.

While this subject of Beauty in the Home has been especially occupying my mind, I have noticed in my visits to my friends

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several simple styles of ornament, which are worthy of attention. Hester gave her father a fire-screen for a Christmas present; as John uses an open grate—the most beautiful and healthful kind of a fire—this screen was very acceptable to him for use, as well as for beauty. Hester had procured two large panes of window-glass, twenty inches by two feet. On one of these she had glued large pressed ferns, a spray of autumn leaves, some grasses, and several moths and butterflies, of which she used the wings, and painted in the bodies; she arranged these materials on the glass until the whole represented a lovely bit of forest scenery. She then cemented the other pane of glass upon this one, so that the ornaments were between the two, and the cement at the edges excluded air. She had this double glass firmly held in a metal frame, and fastened to a screw screen-stand. I never saw a more tasteful object than this with the firelight shining through it. I admired it so much that Hester came to my house, and made up one of the large panes of my sitting-room window, in this same style, fastening her second sheet of glass over the one in the window, so I have now an exquisite fragment of fern scenery, with the sunlight shining through it.

Miriam also invented a method of window trimming for the sash around her front door, which hitherto had been white glass, shaded with vestibule lace. She procured for each of the nine panes around the door a picture representing an upright piece of statuary: she cut out this picture, and with very clear gum-arabic-water glued it with its face to the pane. The next day with a damp sponge she removed all the paper on the back of the picture, until only the fine film on which the picture was stamped remained: this she had been careful not to mar. Again she let it dry fully, and then painted all the window about the picture with oil paint (artist's, not house paint); she laid this on evenly and very thin, in a solid color, and when it was dry varnished the whole with picture varnish, covering both paint

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and picture. Each pane was of a single bright color: thus the lower left-hand pane was orange, the next emerald, the next scarlet, the first transom pane indigo, the next gray, the next indigo, and the right-hand panes matched the left: the whole appearance of the hall was altered by this ornamentation of the door, and I told her it was a treat to come down her stairs and look at this pretty imitation of painted glass.

Miriam's window suggested an idea to Mary Watkins for her sitting-room. Mary presses flowers very beautifully: she glued some delicate sprays of blue flowers upon one of her windows, and varnished the window with picture varnish; the effect was charming.

Hester has in her sitting-room a fine aquarium, but she has time and money for such things. Still I think an aquarium both beautiful, and, in a house full of children, a useful object to interest them in natural things. Helen has a row of hyacinths in glasses, and Miriam, on a common stand covered with oil-cloth, has a bed of moss and a rockery, in which little rock-ferns are growing, and where some real snail-shells and some stuffed birds look very beautiful. Cousin Ann's Sarah gave me, on my birthday, a wire basket with a dish in it where trailing vines and some tall ferns were growing, and poised on the handle was a stuffed robin, looking down at a butterfly which seemed to have just lit on a spray of one of the vines. I do not know that I ever had an ornament in my parlor which I admired more. So do art and nature liberally aid us in the creation of Beauty in our Homes.

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CHAPTER VII.

INDUSTRY IN THE HOME.

HOW AUNT SOPHRONIA THINKS INDUSTRY BENEFITS THE HOME.

I AM fond of reading, and spend several hours each day with my books. Helen laughs at my library, and says she does not understand how I can like such old-fashioned books as I have; perhaps the very reason that they suit me is that they *are* old-fashioned. At all events, there is sound, good sense in the volumes. There is Franklin, for instance: what a mine of valuable thoughts in his works! I was reading in my Franklin only this morning, and I paused over this passage: "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of." Shortly after, as I sat with my sewing, the second Miss Black called. She cried out:

"Always busy, Miss Sophronia! Here is your work-basket full, and I see your book is open on the table. What in the world do you find to do? I never find anything."

"Then, my dear," I replied, "you must be living with your eyes shut, for I never yet saw any one to whom the world did not offer plenty to do. When God created Adam, he created also a business for Adam; he did not make him a gentleman of leisure, with the first years of Creation hanging heavily upon his hands; and so, ever since, when God sends a reasonable soul into the world, he sends with it its especial work and round of duties, which belong to no other soul: believe me, God investigates our doings here, and will make inquiry whether or not we performed this work which he intends for our doing."

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"You look so seriously at things, Miss Sophronia; but do tell me what you find to do. You have your nice house, your good servant, your income: you might sit with folded hands."

"So I might, but I should hear a voice in my ears: 'What *doest* thou here?' And by-and-by God would call upon me: 'Give an account of thy stewardship;' and being compelled to speak the truth, suppose that I must say: 'O, I was in easy circumstances, and I sat with my hands folded.' But you ask what I do. I have my housekeeping to look to, my friends to make comfortable when they visit me, and my sewing to do. Next I have my social duties: I am at leisure, and the experience of several tens of years is in my keeping; therefore I feel an especial call to visit the sick. When a family is down with measles, or scarlet fever, or some other epidemic, why should they be neglected, or the mother be over-taxed, when I am at leisure to help? So, in accidents, I am often sent for: thus my work among the sick fills up a good many hours. Then there are aged people who cannot go abroad, and chronic invalids who get very lonely in their rooms, and feel as if they were forgotten: I visit them. The poor are Christ's legacy to all those of his people who are able to help them, and I have my rounds among the poor, helping them with gifts, securing work for them, advising them, getting them into church and Sunday-school. I have also my church work: having leisure, good health and a few dollars to spare, I ought to help in the benevolent schemes of my church, and I do that. But, while helping others, I must not forget my own; and my nieces have young families. I can be a great help to them by taking home part of their sewing and mending, taking a child home here for a week if the mother is sick, knitting the little mittens and stockings: these are trifles, but they lighten domestic cares for busy mothers. Then once a year Christmas comes, and I want to make presents to my nieces and their servants, to

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my servants and poor friends. So, my dear Miss Black, I find work for all my time, and I have given you this sketch of it, because you asked me, and because, as you say you have nothing to do, I hoped it might be useful to you in suggesting lines of work. But, as one of a large family, I should suppose you would find work in abundance."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Miss Black. "Mother keeps the house, and then there are the servants to do the work."

"Did you never see your mother over-worked? Is she not toiling sometimes until greatly fatigued, or when she has a headache? Pardon me: does not your mother look too old for her years? Could not her daughters have saved her some of that extra work which wears her out?"

"Why don't she ask help, then? She never does," cried Miss Black.

"Some mothers have a false idea of increasing their children's happiness by not asking them to work; and then, help freely offered is better than help demanded, or asked for half a dozen times, or argued over. I have seen girls scowl at being asked to help for an hour a mother who had been toiling exhaustingly for eight hours. I have seen other girls who, with quick eye, sought out every place where they could help, and when finally bidden by the busy mother to go dress, walk, read or visit, begged to be allowed some other share of work until they might both be done together. But, Miss Black, as we are on this subject, and you have introduced it, do you never see your servants over-worked? the kitchen-servant ready to drop with fatigue, when you might cheer and relieve her by making a cake, a few pies, a pan of biscuits or setting a table? Could you not find a time when the other maid, who does up-stairs' work and sewing, would be saved from really too severe driving, if you swept and dusted a room or two, or lent the aid of your needle in the sewing-room?"

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"Dear me, it never entered my head," replied the young lady. "I do as much as my sisters, and we all do nothing. I fix up little trimmings, fancy collars and cuffs, or such things, now and then, as I need them. I put the flowers in the parlor, and help my sister make our bed. I read a book now and then if it is interesting, and I practise some, and get ready my dress, if I am going to a party, and I sit and look out of the window, or I take an afternoon nap: we sit up so late, having evening callers; and I go shopping, and I walk around the streets, or make a few calls, and—there, that is all I do."

"But, my dear girl, what of all this is useful to yourself or to others? With what of all this is God pleased? What of all this is the work which he sent into the world for your doing?"

"I'm sure I don't know! You quite frighten me asking that."

"Consider it is a question that must meet you some day, as it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after that comes the judgment. Reason would say, have an answer ready."

"Frankly, Miss Sophronia, what could girls like myself and my three sisters do? What *ought* we to do?"

"That is asking a stranger a delicate question. But did you never hear your mother complaining of pressure of work, worrying over bills for sewing, over the complaints of the servants? Now could you not relieve her in these matters? Each two of you girls share a room; why not one of you take entire charge of that room? sweeping, dusting, bed-making, mending carpet, towels, bedding—in fact, being responsible for absolute order there. The other two could then take care one of the parlor, one of the dining-room, keeping all bright and in repair. Consider how much better it would be done; how much more comfort your two servants would have, and how much longer they would be likely to stay; thus your mother would be greatly relieved. Suppose, then, one of you girls made all the cake, another all the desserts, another took charge

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of the stockings of your father and three brothers, another made the shirts: you see the two servants, in a family of nine, would still find work enough; and you as interested parties would be economical in the cooking which you did, and your mother, relieved of a certain share of her mending and making and supervising, would feel her vigor renewed."

"But we don't know how to do these things!"

"You ought to know how, and the sooner you learn the better. Your mother and the maids would teach you gladly."

"But with all that we should be worked to death!"

"Pray, then, how long do you expect your mother to live? But instead of being worked to death, you would all be in better health, have finer complexions, better spirits and a more cheerful home—to say nothing of doing your duty to God, your parents and your fellow-creatures. Did you ever read a saying of Sydney Smith's?—'Let every man be occupied, and occupied in the highest employment of which his nature is capable, and die with the consciousness that he has done his best.'"

"No," said Miss Black, "I never did. I am half inclined to believe you, Miss Sophronia, that we should be happier if we were more industrious. Sometimes when we have been actually working for a fair, or a festival, or preparing for a party, we have really enjoyed ourselves: possibly, it was because we were busy. Certainly I don't think work could made us less happy than we are: for you never saw such a listless, bored set as we are, unless we are putting on our best spirits to entertain a few gentlemen callers."

"And the poor father, and mother, and brothers—they are treated to the listlessness and boredom: is that making Home happy?"

"I fear not. I never thought I was responsible for making Home happy; or that taking hold and doing something was a means to that end. I'll tell my sisters what you say, and think it over."

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After Miss Black had gone, I sat considering what a sin parents commit, who do not bring up their children to be industrious, to feel that every home should be a hive of industry, that, in one way or another, every member of the family must contribute their share of labor to home activities. How little do we think of impressing upon the minds of the young the fact, that *God expects them to do something!* As far as I can learn from the Scripture, heaven itself seems a place of joyous activity. I never yet read of a good person who was not a busy person; business and happiness seem also commingled in this world; and activity, useful activity and good health go hand in hand. Cultivate laziness in a child, and you cultivate poverty, poor health, unhappiness and crime. What a fashion of slow suicide is this much talked of "killing our time!" How are mothers left weary and discouraged, who have not trained their children to help them heartily and lovingly! The hand of the diligent maketh rich; being "not slothful in business" is one of the main ways of serving the Lord, who called us to labor. I felt quite stirred up as I considered this question, and I made up my mind to get what information on the subject I could, and to talk of it very earnestly with my nieces and young friends, and urge them to train up their children in habits of industry and helpfulness—to have their Homes centres of good activity. While I was thinking thus, Cousin Ann came in. She had driven in to the village with a quantity of eggs and butter for the hotel, and she came, as she often does, to take dinner with me. Of course I did not betray Miss Black's confidences, nor did I mention Mrs. Black's great failure in bringing up her children; but I said to Cousin Ann, when she was comfortably seated and had begun to knit on a stocking for Helen's Tom:

"Cousin Ann, you are never idle, and your children are just ike you in that."

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"Trained them to it," said Cousin Ann.

"I should like to know how you did it. I have had the sub ject of industry and indolence in Homes brought before my mind this morning, and I want to know how you proceeded in bringing up all your family to be industrious."

"I made a habit of it, in the first place," said Cousin Ann, "and then I gave them an object in it; and meantime I studied the children themselves, so as to direct their industry as far as I could in a natural bent, and not make labor a bitterness to them. For instance Fred always took to gardening, while Reed had a natural love of animals, and Dick has always been a terribly active child, with big muscles which wanted to be exercised; a boy, who, if he couldn't let off his energy in some honest hard work, would be up to all sorts of mischief, just to get a vent for his overflowing animal energy. We ought to study children in giving out their work, and while necessity rules often in distributing employment, we should follow the natural bent, just as far as we can. Well, as I was saying, I made industry a habit for my children. I taught them to wait on themselves, to clear up litter which they made, to get out and put by their own toys. You could hardly imagine, Sophronia, how early a young child can be taught to help. I did my own work when Fred, Reed and Sarah were little—that is, most of the time. I taught them, first, not to be troublesome to me, and then to help me. The little things could bring chips or wood from the wood-house, stick by stick, or feed the chickens, or open and shut doors, and so on to larger and larger things. To be sure they made mistakes, and made more work than they did, in the very effort to help, and at first I should have saved time and toil doing it all myself. But I remembered that I was working for the future, that I was moulding the children into such men and women as they would be, that as I taught them now I should be helped by them after a while: so I kept steadily on teaching them. They

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got bruises in falls, ran splinters into their fingers, burnt their busy little hands; but these misadventures taught them carefulness, and through it all they got a fixed habit of being helpful and busy, and of not sitting idle when there was work to be done, and other people were busy. Of course, you understand me, Sophronia, I don't mean that now Sarah would not sit down, or take a book, or go dress herself, because there were dishes to wash, and the servant was washing them; so long as the girl knows how and has the time, her own work can be left to her; but Sarah feels that she owes to God the right use of her time, and she would not dare to spend an idle day; she changes work, and rests in the change; she is working while she informs her mind, makes her clothes, and takes her part in the homework of all kinds."

"You mentioned giving your children a special interest in work, as well as a fixed habit of doing it," I said.

"Yes, 'in all labor there is profit,' says the Scripture, and I wanted my children practically to learn that. I said Fred naturally loved gardening. I set him at it early. I had him help me in my garden among the vegetables, and I gave him a sunny strip of border for himself, where he planted vegetables which he sold on his own account—that is, when we sent a load of vegetables to market, Fred's lettuces, bunches of onions, or radishes, or beets, or his heads of cabbage were counted in, and he got what money they brought. He did not rob us of his help while he raised these things: he got the time by putting industry against idleness. We were as well pleased when he treated himself to a pair of skates as to a nice book, and he always gave away a portion of his own. Reed, on the other hand, hated gardening; he worked in the garden when I bid him, but it was just as easy to set Reed to tending the fowls, to making chicken-coops, cleaning the hen-house, putting up roosts, feeding fowls, pounding fresh bones for them, or feeding the

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calves and watering the horses: he did these things well. So he was given his especial hen, his sheep, his calf, and he worked like a hero, to bring them up in the way that they should go; to return him profit, they were fed and housed, and cared for with all his might. He learned the care of stock, and you know he has a stock-farm now, and many of his brutes are of his own raising. Sarah early learned to help me in the house, and she had her little share in the butter. She and Fred both gathered and sold garden seeds and sweet herbs to the grocer here in the village, and as she grew older, when by extra industry she hemmed a set of sheets, or made up half-a-dozen pair of pillow-cases, she got her pay for them. Not that any of them learned to *claim* pay from us; we gave it and they took it as an *encouragement.* As we grew better off, Sarah got her allowance, so that she would know how to use money wisely. Dick was allowed to use his energies in wood-chopping, in hauling fuel from the wood-lot, in cleaning walks, in ploughing before and after school. All the boys were set at helping their father on the farm as the two girls helped me in-doors. When they proposed new plans, as bee-keeping or sorghum-raising, we let them try it, and we always kept them in school and gave them all the books and papers we could. Indeed, Sophronia, I think they have been as happy a set of children as ever lived, and as industrious too."

"I've no doubt," I replied, "that their happiness rose in a large degree from their industry, which kept them from moping and mischief, and gave them the peaceful consciousness of well-doing, for idleness is misery."

"Some mothers think," resumed Cousin Ann, "that they can get no help in the house from boys: if they have no daughters they must work on unaided. I have seen boys sitting in a kitchen when their mother was bringing fuel, or water, or blacking a stove, or when their sisters, tired with washing or baking,

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were performing these tasks. The boys had been at work out of doors perhaps, or, out-of-door work being done, they had done nothing; if they hung up their caps and put by their boots it was as much as they thought they could do within doors. Now I hold that nothing is more really ennobling and improving to a boy than to learn to do little things to help his mother in the house. Where servants are kept, his round of household duties is but a small one, but he should be taught to do all that he can. Why cannot he learn to set chairs in their places? to pick up and fill a spilled work-basket? to hold and amuse a fretting child? to carry a meal to an invalid? to bathe an aching head? All these things will not make him 'a Miss Nancy,' but will tone down his boyish roughness, ameliorate his awkwardness, make him thoughtful for others, and so truly manly in using his strength to aid weakness. I taught my boys to sweep and dust a room; to scour knives; to blacken a stove; to set a table; I had them so trained that they would have scorned to sit by a stove and see their sister or mother filling the stove with fuel or bringing a bucket of water. I remember once being at a house where the only son was preparing for the ministry; the room became chilly; his worship was reading a paper; he bawled to his sister, who was in the next room getting dinner: 'Mag! bring a scuttle of coal for this stove!' I made up my mind that that family had not been trained in *family industry:* the industry had been all on one side. Once I went to take a firkin of butter to Mrs. Winton. It was a number of years ago, and however it happened, she had no girl. It was about eight in the morning; little Grace was washing the dishes, and one of her brothers was drying them; the oldest boy had just finished putting the dining-room in order. and I tell you it was in order. Nor was he a bit ashamed of it. He said: 'Cousin Ann, see how well I can do up a room; this is all my work to-day; now if you'll wait until I have polished the breakfast-knives, I'll ride

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as far as school with you;' and Mrs. Winton told me those two boys got up, made the fire, filled the tea-kettle, and set the breakfast-table, before she and Grace got down to cook breakfast. She said they could make their beds, too."

"It didn't hurt them," I said, "for those two Wintons are the very first young men in this town."

"Hurt them! no," said Cousin Ann: "North Winton will not plead a case less eloquently for having been trained to be useful, and I think the way Robert was brought up to wait on his mother will make him a better doctor. In fact, Sophronia, my rule is, to have a busy household, and give every member a share of work."

"I'm glad to get your views," I replied, "for I mean to talk with my young friends about activity and industry in the Household. You don't seem afraid of wearing folks out with work, Cousin Ann; how is that?"

"I hope you understand me, Sophronia," said Cousin Ann; "I do not look on work as an end in itself, neither as the highest human good, and in the word *work*, as we are now talking, I include all that is useful to ourselves or others; we are given, as I take it, by the Lord himself, a certain time to live in the world, and a certain amount of good, of adding to the sum of human happiness and worthiness, which we can do in that time. The good done is the end, and the work is the means to gain it; we cannot do this good without activity, and, moreover, the Lord has given us enough to do to fill up all our time. Considering all this, I do not think that work or activity is other than man's natural condition, and so it is likely to be a healthful condition. People do get injured by severe work, but if you will look into these cases, you will see that the injury-doing work was not of the Lord's ordering. Persons hurt themselves by the fierce kind of work they do to hurry up a fortune: to grasp too soon or too much what is going in the way of money.

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Other people wear out of the over-work of pride; they must have ornaments, fineries, elaborate dress, or furnishings, to out-do their neighbors, and they kill themselves for that. Other people still are working double shares, doing the work which some idle member of their families has left undone; the conscientious and busy one becoming the victim of some sluggard's selfishness: thus the mothers of lazy daughters. Again, I have seen folks who wore themselves out with the strain of fretting, anxiety, repining over their work, grinding their minds to pieces with the irritation of unwillingness or useless worry to do more or better than they reasonably can. Still other victims of work are those who work without any system, and so the labor which would be healthful and moderate becomes a burden, sinking them into insanity or the grave. Most people who are said to die of over-work die of misdirected activity, or of neglect of system in their work. I should say that system is to labor what oil is to machinery: without it all goes heavily and creaking, and wears out speedily.

"Bustle, Sophronia, is not industry, as you very well know; people flutter and bustle about like a hen raising ducks, and then complain that their work has killed them, when it was the *fuss* that was the killing cause. To go back to where I started: work is from God, and he has told us how to work, so that in working we shall be happy and strong and effective. He says first for each day: 'The night cometh, when no man can work.' He gave the night for sleep, the evening hours for quiet resting of body and mind. When folks toil along in the evenings, after the brutes have gone to rest, somebody is usually to blame: vanity, somebody's selfishness, the avarice of employers who will not give living wages for ten daylight hours' toil; some check has been offered to God's beneficent plan. So if we don't want to be killed by work, let us take a fair share of sleep; and let us rest, or have some very easy restful occupation for evening

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At our house we have for evenings more reading than anything else; the children spend some time on their next day's lessons; the stocking-darning is evening work, and so, in the season, is fruit-paring. Sometimes, to be sure, when we are making mince-meat or sausages, the work runs into the evening, and so in killing time; but that is only on distant occasions, and so does no damage. The next rule for resting which the Lord gives is a weekly rule: 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Thou shalt do no labor, neither thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger within thy gates.' The New Testament shows that we must on Sabbath 'assemble ourselves together' for worship, give the sick due aid, and bestow needed attention on the brutes, and give ourselves our proper food. Outside of this we are to *rest;* and I promise you, Sophronia, if this were observed, no elaborate dressing, no big dinners, no visits, no amusements, but a complete, quiet, family resting, the church, the proper books, a nap if one is feeble or weary, and a real rest-day from sun to sun, there would be no breaking down from overwork, no farmers' wives in mad-houses."

"But how about the milk, and the butter, and the eggs, Cousin Ann?" I ventured to ask.

"The eggs can be left until Monday morning from Saturday evening. The milking must be done for the sake of the animals; but if milk that needs churning is churned on Saturday night, the rest, if the dairy is properly aired, cleaned and shaded, can be left until Monday morning. Don't tell me milk must be churned or carried to the cheese-factory on Sunday; it is clear to my mind that if people were compelled to give to the Lord the price of all the cheese and butter made on His day, they'd find means of keeping the milk over Sunday."

"Very true," I said, "but go on with your views about resting."

"The Lord gave to the people of Israel several national

holidays each year, requiring old and young, bond and free, to share them joyously. From this example we should set a due value on certain fixed holidays, and not ruthlessly run our work over them, but observe them with our whole families, in some such way as shall give the most change to the current of our thoughts and cares. We have New Year's, Washington's Birthday, Easter, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas. As the reach between Easter and the Fourth, and from that on to Thanksgiving, is pretty long, I should throw, in those spaces, a birthday keeping, a picnic day, a festival of some kind, and these days will be found to strengthen family ties, freshen health and interest in work, and give a new spring of vitality to all our labors. People who live in this way will not die of overwork, Sophronia."

Hester had come in quietly during the conversation. I said to her:

"Hester, you are always busy, and yet always fresh and strong. Aside from the care which you take of your health, how do you manage your work so that you shall not complain of over-exhaustion?"

"I find," replied Hester, "that there is great rest in mere *change* of labor. It is not so much, when one is tired, that one needs to drop everything and lie or sit with folded hands: this *is* sometimes needful; but there is true and effective rest in bringing into action an entirely different set of thoughts and of muscles. Thus, one who is tired with sweeping, scrubbing or ironing, can rest thoroughly by bathing face and hands, taking a footstool and a comfortable chair, and taking up some sewing. If I have tired myself by several days of writing, or of study of languages, or by the pursuit of any one difficult subject, I find that I rest my mind and body by an entire change of work: by taking up some study in natural sciences, by taking a few days for sewing or social duties, or by doing some work in the house.

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With this in view I arrange that house-cleaning, preserving, or preparing the clothing for a change of seasons, shall come after some heavy piece of brain work, when I need the rest of change."

"The Lord teaches us that lesson, I think," said Cousin Ann, "in the change of seasons itself. This change, four times in a year, necessarily gives us a change in our labors—sowing, haying, harvesting, fruit-picking, fall-ploughing, winter work of repairing utensils and buildings, follow one after the other, and rest us by the change which they afford. In the house this is also true."

"The fact is," said Hester, "that more diseases arise from indolence than from overwork: idleness begets vice, and vice fosters disease. One reason why, taken as a whole, city and town girls are feebler than country girls is, that they have less to do; they idle about and fix their tastes on luxury and folly and amusements; their minds and bodies lose all spring and vigor. Wasting their lives in this wretched way, girls become extravagant and expensive in their wants, and weak in muscle, nerves and morals; young men become foppish, dishonest and intemperate. Parents, guardians and teachers should wake up to the dangers of this idleness, which lies at the root of much mania, hysteria and crime. This laziness is creating for us in the cities a generation of paupers and hospital patients; the good-hearted, pretty, naturally bright girl becomes the vapid, morbid, chronic invalid. Not an invalid by dispensation of Providence, but the invalid of her own making; and a hardy and more courageous race will take the place of these pining or vicious beings. I feel awake on this subject because I have studied it carefully lately, while preparing an article upon it for press."

"You could not choose a better or more useful theme," said Cousin Ann. "But I declare, Sophronia, it is almost three o'clock! I often say I must keep away from your house, for no sooner do I get here, than you start me off on some subject

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which I am interested in, and then, as I have to-day, I spend the whole morning doing—"

"Don't you dare to say 'nothing,' Cousin Ann, for you said yourself, that one was always working well when doing anything for the benefit of others, and to-day you have been very greatly benefiting me."

Since this day's conversations, I have made myself quite a missionary in behalf of Household Industry. The more I think of the subject the more important does it appear to me. It has been well said that "It is what is saved, not what is made, which constitutes national as well as individual wealth." Every one will allow that labor is a source of wealth; but one does not so quickly see how the individual labors of each member of a family will create that saving, which results in comfortable circumstances, if not in affluence. But look at this a moment: a daughter in a family is brought up in habits of industry and not in idleness; industry establishes her own health, and her aid keeps her mother from being worked into a fit of sickness, or a state of confirmed ill-health: what a saving is here at once in the mere matters of medicines, nursing and doctor's bills! In a family of industrious daughters, skilled in the use of the needle, how much longer do clothes last, than where nobody has energy to repair, or make over, or neatly mend, and clothes fall to pieces to be replaced by new ones! The delicate taste, the interested, thoughtful industry of the family, knowing each one's needs, will go twice as far as the hired labor of the seamstress. And here I feel like going off on the word *seamstress*, to protest against the starvation-wages paid to seamstresses by the clothing-warehouse owners; and I would entreat ladies not to try to save, or to escape care by purchasing ready-made dresses and undergarments, every one of which may be at the price of blood—as was to David the water of the well of Bethlehem, when he would not drink. No, my dear sisters, if

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you need to hire your clothes made, or if you prefer it, or can afford it, have the seamstress in the house; there give her a warm, sunny sewing-room; if she stays at night, give her a nice bed-chamber, give her three good meals a day, and don't require her to sew on in the evening, just because she is on hand, and will do it rather than lose your patronage.

Don't grind the faces of the poor, my dear women. Fortune was represented formerly with a *wheel*, and time has a way of bringing its revenges. Who can tell whether you, or your child, or grandchild may be toiling for bread at a needle's point? In families where all are reasonably and cheerfully busy, there is not felt this passion for driving some *one;* as Cousin Ann said: "The over-work of the one is usually the satisfaction offered for the laziness of several." A thrifty country lady once told me her method of getting her sewing done for a large family: she was not very well-to-do, and to save money was a necessity to her. She found in the city a seamstress, who, with hard labor for nine months in the year, barely managed to keep the wolf from the door, while she wore herself out. This woman was engaged by the farmer's wife for the three warm months. The wages were low, but she had first-rate country living, change of air, a fresh, pleasant room, kind society, her evenings and Sabbaths to herself. It was a blessed rest, and renewed her strength and courage for the year. She went home laden with gifts of butter, eggs, dried fruit, meat—a stock to help her little housekeeping on for a long while to come.

I am glad that Mary Watkins is bringing her little girl up in the same industrious way in which she was herself trained. I was there the other day, and the little thing, seated in her small rocking-chair by her mother's side, was sewing carpet-rags: she is scarcely five; and this, and a little hemming on coarse towels, is her first essay at sewing. Mary's boy, who is about three and a half, was shelling seed-peas, and I was amused at

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the way Mary had taken to keep him from making a litter with the work. She had set him in a washtub, and he shelled the peas into the tub where he was. On one side his tub stood a large basket with the dried pea-pods, and the empty husks he put into a basket on the other side. Mary said that each of the children had thus a half hour's work in the afternoon, and in the morning they each had half an hour with their lessons. Besides this, while the breakfast was being cleared away, Jimmy brought in three baskets of chips and small wood, and Nettie wiped the spoons and tea-cups for her mother. Mary said that the children were much better natured, enjoyed their play better, and were more careful and less destructive for this little responsibility of having something to do; and she added, with pride, that it was quite surprising how handy and careful Nettie was. She was likely to prove an excellent little housewife, and Jimmy was very fond of being useful also.

Helen seems less inclined to instruct her children in being useful. She pleads that she has no time to teach them; that she has no patience to attend to their lessons; that Belle will pick up sewing some time, she supposes; that it is much easier to do things herself than worry with children's work, and that in her house about one person's time is needed to repair the mischief of Master Tom.

"Ah, Helen!" I cried, "the idle child is the mischievous child; it would take far less time and patience to teach Tom useful work than to let him turn his energies on mischief."

"But what on earth can Tom do?" asked Helen.

"Hannah is kind; let him go to the kitchen, and string beans and shell peas; let him learn to rub the knives; let him be charged with sweeping the back yard each day; let him black his father's shoes and his own."

"Goodness!" said Helen, "he would black himself and the kitchen floor a deal more than the shoes!"

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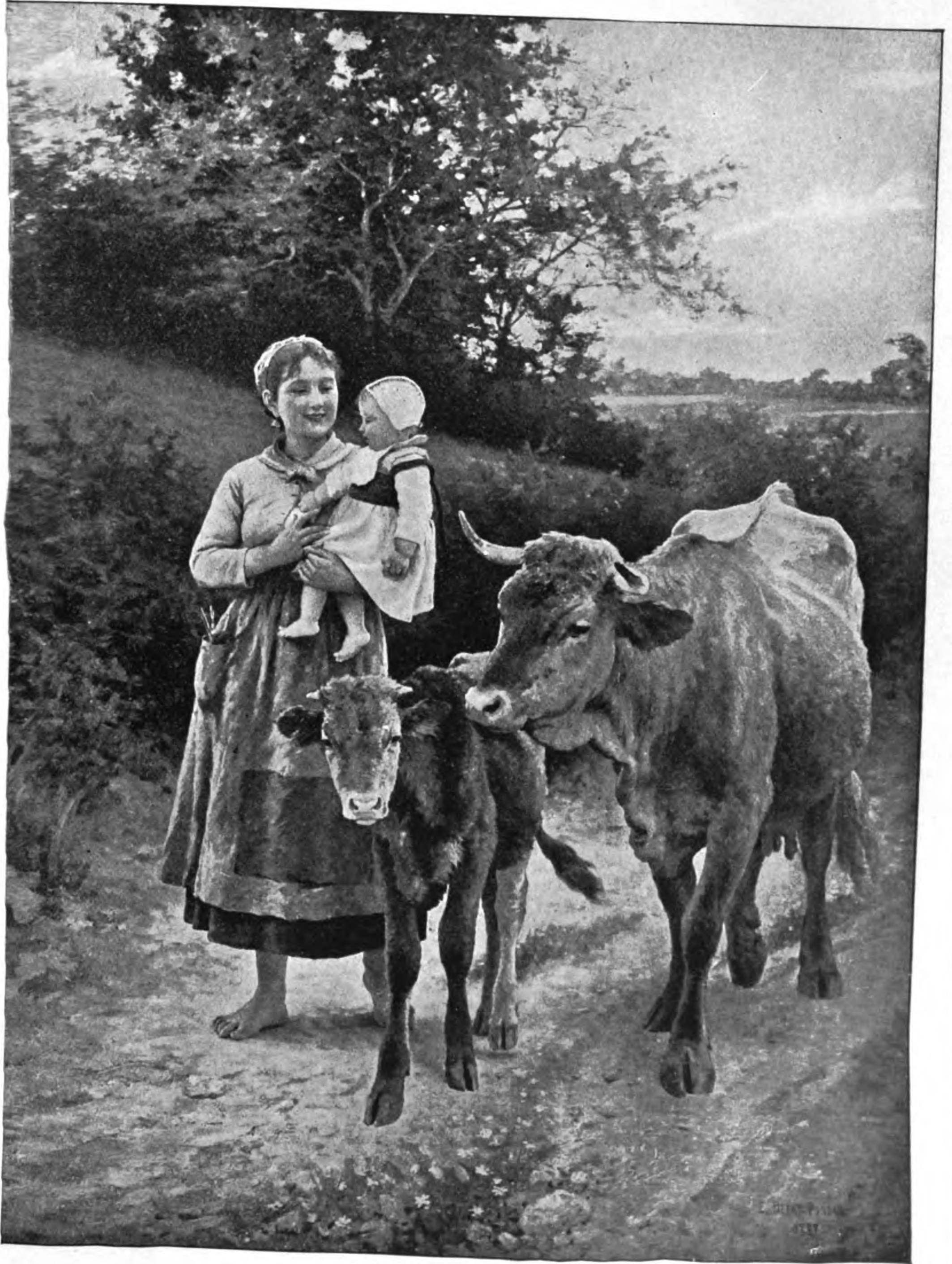

RETURNING HOME.

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"Helen, many a city youngster of his age makes his own living by boot-blacking. Let him take the boots to the shed, tie a kitchen-apron around his neck, and let Hannah show him how, once or twice, and be a judge when his work is properly finished. Anything is better than rampant, destructive idleness. Get him a few tools and some wood, and let him make flower-frames and little stools or boxes: find some use for his manufactures. Then do not give way to indolence, and neglect teaching him to read, write and cipher. Happy the child whose mother is his first teacher! As for Belle, Helen, don't dream she will grow into industry without being taught it. You have complained heartily of your over-indulgent grandmother, who did not teach you to sew, to keep house, to systematize your work: you suffer from that fatal neglect every day of your life; and yet you dare to pass such a legacy on to your daughter. Consider that she may live to be a wife and mother, and that as you train her, you make or mar a future Household, and become a good angel or an evil genius to your descendants."

"But, aunt," argued Helen, "some folks grow into these things without ever being taught. Look at Hester: she taught herself to keep house after she had grown up!"

"Hester happens to be a genius, and a person of uncommon conscientiousness, Helen," I replied; "she will not neglect any work, agreeable or otherwise, which it falls to her lot to do. The rule is, however, that we do not learn useful things by intuition, but we must be taught them. When one assumes a mother's responsibilities one owes it to her children to arm them against want and helplessness, by teaching them to be self-reliant and industrious. You remember it was among the laws of the Jews that a father should have his son circumcised, teach him the law and teach him a trade; even the wealthiest taught their sons a trade to secure them against possible want. Thus

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Paul made tents. While the son must be taught some business of life, there is one business which should always be taught a daughter—the business of housekeeping, in all its departments. That sensible people, the Germans, do not neglect, as do we, this training in housekeeping; the wealthiest and the highest in rank take a pride in practically knowing all about it. This is not to be learned in a few theoretical lessons; it can be well acquired only by giving children from their earliest years their share of home work."

It is hard to persuade Helen to do even a plain duty of this kind, because she is so ignorant of work herself, and naturally so indolent. I should think her losses, vexations, trials and mortifications from having as a girl been habituated to indolence, and so knowing nothing of her duties as head of a household, would stir her up to have Belle well taught. Mark and Miriam had far less cash capital to begin life on than Frank and Helen, but the industry and good judgment of Mark have been so seconded by Miriam's skill, taste, economy and industry at home, that I find they are not only laying up more money than Frank, but are living much more handsomely. There, too, were Reuben and Cousin Ann: all they had to set out with was a run-down and heavily-mortgaged farm, but by the united effort and industry and economy of the whole family, now they own the finest farm in the county; the two elder sons own a farm on each side their parents; Sarah, who is next year to be married to young Winton, will be very handsomely portioned; they have plenty for hospitality; they are liberal in giving; it should have been written on their doorway: 'Seest thou a man diligent in business, he shall stand before kings.' Yes, my idea of a family is a family of cheerful, useful activity; a hive of honey-bees; not one or two workers—a tired father, a worn-out mother, an enslaved servant or two—and all the rest drones.

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What a spectacle is this Household at Work! The mother amply aided; all things in order; work done beautifully and systematically; intelligence reigning; time is here for books and for art, and for beauty, and social life, because all have labored willingly; it is not alone the mother's hands which toiled, while daughters lay in bed, but all these are virtuous women whose price is above rubies.

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CHAPTER VIII.

LITERATURE IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S IDEAS OF BOOKS AND READING.

IT has long been my opinion that one of the chief ways of making a home happy, thriving and useful in its influence, is to supply it well with books and papers. Having carefully observed and contrasted homes well furnished with reading matter, and homes where literature is unknown, I find that intelligence, family affection, thrift, economy, business habits, and joyous home-loving mark the homes with books; and bickering, wastefulness, general ignorance and idle pleasure-seeking, characterize the others. A home without books argues at once a lack of educative influences; it reduces its members to find the entertainment and interest, which they *will inevitably* seek, away from home in silly gossip, frequently resulting in mischief, in games which are often the beginning of quarrelling and cheating, in rudeness and thriftlessness, all far more expensive than a large library of books. Such a Home without reading is also shut off from a stream of new and useful information constantly supplied by daily and weekly papers. It is not merely that these papers contain the current affairs of the day, the news of church, and of politics, and foreign affairs, and the market reports—all valuable, and without which a man can hardly be a reasonable citizen or a decent manager of his own business—but these papers contain valuable information on subjects of health, of farm-work, of fruit-culture, of household-work, cooking, cleaning, the care of animals; any one item of

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which might prove on occasion worth the year's price of a paper. Cousin Reuben takes a number of newspapers. He remarked to me once, that if he had started on his farm without any knowledge or experience of work, or of arranging his house so as to keep it in a sound, healthful condition, he might yet by a diligent study of his papers, applying to them his own judgment, have learned how to manage all his affairs in a satisfactory manner. He added: "I've paid out hundreds of dollars in my time for my newspapers, for I am not such a sneak as to try and steal my information from the editors. I pay in advance, and if I've paid a few hundreds out, I've taken a good many hundreds in by the use of them. My boys never had to hang around a store, or a grog-shop, or a bar-room to learn what was going on in the world; consequently they never learned to drink grog nor to waste their time. Many is the hint we've got in stock-raising, in fruit and vegetable culture, and many is the poor bargain we've been saved from making, by reading a good, respectable, law-upholding, honest-dealing paper. We took care as to the quality of our papers. We took our church papers, too, and then we knew what was being done by the church, and where we'd better give when we had a little to spare; and our minister didn't have to talk himself hoarse explaining things which it was our business to know; we enjoyed the sermons more, and felt ourselves stirred up and more a part of the church for reading all about it; and the children had Sunday reading, and did not find the Sabbath a weariness."

When I go into Mrs. Winton's of an evening, I usually find the family reading. They have the magazines of the month, the new books on the table. If Mr. Winton and the two sons are free from business cares in the evenings, there is no wondering what to do: they know where will be a comfortable room, a good light, quiet, beauty of surroundings, and occupation for the mind; the family-room is a scene of comfort, of

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promise. How can these young folks help being honorable and useful? They are daily filling their minds with things beautiful, true, practical; they have no waste hours for Satan to fill with mischief, no vacant brains to be provoked to evil deeds.

I was at Cousin Ann's son's farm one day, and Reed was walking about with me showing his territories; and, indeed, they were so well kept that they were a treat to see. The cattle all looked like prize cattle. He had names for them all; and one handsome young heifer he called "Books," and a big sheep "Maga," which he informed me was "short for magazines," and a family of black Spanish hens ran to the call of "Papers!" I asked what in the world it all meant. He told me that when he married, his mother gave him a pair of black Spanish fowls, and told him to let their produce *keep him in papers*. He accordingly called them "papers" for fun, and he found that the eggs and chickens would supply him handsomely with papers. When the supply exceeded the demand he would lay the surplus up to begin a fund for providing his children with reading. His wife had proposed that the heifer should be dedicated to the cause of a library; so he, after subtracting the cost of the animal's keep, meant to use her produce in buying books. The sheep had been a pet lamb given to his wife by her sister, and she, having paid her board, secured them a magazine or so.

"Well, well, Reed!" I cried; "that is a pretty sharp idea, and worthy of your mother's son."

"Why, Aunt Sophronia," replied Reed, "we were brought up on books, and we could not live without them. I expect to make a decent fortune here, but I got my first notions of the value and care of stock from books and papers. I noticed all that I found on that theme: it interested me; I carried out many suggestions and found them valuable. We boys never wanted to run off in the evenings: we got in hungry and tired;

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we found all neat, a good meal, a comfortable room, with a light on a table where our books were. We made ourselves tidy, had our supper, and saw no attraction in village corners, or in smoky saloons: for here was room, and company, a good story, a book of travels, books which our parents bought us with much self-denial, books which we borrowed, books from the school library, books bought out of our own earnings. I remember we boys clubbed our savings one fall, and bought 'Kane's Arctic Expedition' for winter reading. We had out our maps; we all read the book, parents and all; we talked of it at the table; every cold snap made it more vivid to us; we got out our geographies; we borrowed all we could get on the subject of the North Seas. What paltry tavern would have tempted us in comparison with those Northern wonders? Whichever one knew the most about it was to own the book; but we all knew it so thoroughly that father could not decide between us, and we gave it to mother for her birthday. But what odds, all that was our mother's was ours!"

"I remember," I said, "you children never destroyed your books. And what scrap-books you used to make!"

"Yes, indeed, we were taught to *respect* a book. Father told us marvels of times before printing and of costly books. We were trained to take care even of our toy books, to hand them down for the happiness of our juniors; and as for the scrap-books, mother thought children ought to grow up with books to take naturally to loving them, so we cut out sheets of old muslin, and pasted pictures and letters on them, indestructible books for the babies—why my little year-old has one of them now!"

Well, that as I consider it is the secret of Cousin Ann's success. She always began at the beginning, and faithfully built up from that. She always felt that she was training her children for the *future*, and that it did make a deal of difference what they did when they were little.

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This is emphatically an Age of Books. Children will see a deal of them as they go on in life. If you do not teach them to choose and love good books, they will skim over bad ones just enough to get poisoned by them. I think children should be taught to love books. First, by always seeing them around them, and by owning them from their earliest years. Second, by being taught to respect them and take good care of them: a little child should not be permitted to destroy books. For very little children, indestructible cloth books, bought or home-made, are the best thing that they can have. Third, they should be taught to love books and use them, by giving them books which they can enjoy—child's books, toy books, so they are pure and genial in matter and manner. We should sympathize with the child's love of the impossible, of the marvellous, the amusing. "Fairy Tales," and "Mother Goose," the dear old toy books of "Dame Crumb," and "Mother Hubbard," and "Jack, the Giant-Killer," and "Red Riding Hood," are a part of the blissful inheritance of childhood.

With what tender love does Hugh Miller in his "Schools and Schoolmasters" speak of his first library, kept in a "nine-inch square birch-bark box." Here he had "Aladdin; or, The Wonderful Lamp," "Sinbad, the Sailor," "Jack and the Bean-Stalk," "Beauty and the Beast." "And by these I passed on, without being conscious of break or line of division, to books on which the learned are content to write commentaries and dissertations, but which I found to be quite as nice children's books as any others." So Dickens adds his testimony in his "Recollections of My Christmas-Tree:" "Jack Beanstalk—how noble, with his sword of sharpness and his shoes of swiftness! Little Red Riding Hood comes to me one Christmas-Eve to give me information of the cruelty and treachery of that dissembling Wolf which ate her Grandmother! *She* was my first-love. Hush! Now not Robin Hood, not Valentine, not the Yellow Dwarf: I

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have passed him and all Mother Bunch's wonders without mention; but an Eastern King, with glittering scimitar and turban. It is the setting in of the bright 'Arabian Nights.' Oh, now all common things become uncommon and enchanted to me!"

Children cannot always be reading what we are pleased to call *useful books*. They have their place, but they are a part, and not the whole. And how do we know that these crude and embryonic books do not have their own great use and fitness, assimilating with the child's crude and embryonic powers? Children should have Sabbath books. The Bible should have its stories pointed out for their reading. Give the young child the Bible: he stumbles on the tenth chapter of Genesis, invaluable to Science; upon a Psalm which, to the old tried heart, is as water from Bethlehem's Well, or on marvellous Hebrews, or knotty Romans, or the genealogical chapters in Chronicles, and he says in his heart that it is a terribly dull, hard book; and how can you expect him to like it? How can you, indeed? Why did you not give him that marvel tale of Samson, or that sweet romance of Ruth, or the wonder-book of Jonah on the sea, or the thrilling episodes in the life of Daniel, or the pathetic history of Joseph, or, best of all, the story of a Babe in a manger? He had a right to know what God put there *for him;* to read of the dead girl raised to life, and the young man sitting upon his bier, or the prodigal who came to himself.

There is no child who will not hungrily take to "Pilgrims' Progress." Buy a handsome copy, with plenty of pictures of Pilgrim armed, of the giants, of great Apollyon "straddling quite over the way," of lions, of the four boys, of Captain Greatheart slaying robbers. Keep this glorious book for Sundays, and instead of a fretting after "to-morrow," and a restlessness and riot, the child will wish two Sundays came in a week. So there is the story of the Holy War to captivate the heart of old or young. Plenty of good Sunday reading can and should be

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found; stories of missionary heroism, tales of Huguenot, Covenanter and Waldensian, lives well told of the champions of Christendom, of Luther, full of force and fire, of Knox, unknown to fear, of zealous Calvin and tender Melancthon. Plenty is there of attractive and worthy, without being reduced to buy the moral dish-water trash, about good boys who stole apples, or maidens who wind off yards of moral sentiments, and end by making a splendid marriage.

As the children grow older the toy-books yield to histories, travels, explorations, and the fairy tales of science. Give them books on insects, on birds, on flowers, on shells, and they will learn to keep their eyes open, and compare what they see with what they read. This reminds me of Helen's little Tom. She sent him to school to keep him out of mischief, and he learned to read. He might possibly have fallen into a ruinous line of dime novels and flash papers, had not Hester made up her mind that Tom had a taste for natural sciences. To her father's private horror, she took Tom home with her for a week, and introduced him to the museum, and then as he wanted a museum, and said his three younger sisters tore up all his things, Hester presented him with a mite of a room behind her laundry, where he was to put up shelves and make a museum. Mr. Nugent took Tom out on some of his long tramps, made in connection with his scientific writing, and Tom astounded his father with a demand for "money to buy books about bugs and things." Frank, glad to have the child interested, gave him the money to lay out under Hester's supervision, and I really believe the youngster's newly acquired fondness for natural science will be the making of him. We all of us save for him any interesting fact or anecdote connected with the theme which he is pursuing. How many boys there are who could be brought off the streets, and out of demoralizing society and vicious reading, by having their minds turned to some subject of interest, having books

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suited to some taste which they develop, and finding that their own interests and ideas are worthy of the attention of grown people!

This last winter we had in our village a Literary Society, composed of young and old from the village and county round. The Wintons, the Burrs, my three nieces, Cousin Ann's two married sons and their wives, Sarah, Mary Watkins and her husband, and others. It was very enjoyable; we read; we talked on subjects started by our reading; we purchased a few volumes in partnership; we took a magazine; we had essays on important themes. One of these was by Hester, on the subject of—

WHAT TO READ.

Of all the influences about us in the present age, perhaps none is so largely educative as that of reading: the press even distances the pulpit in its control over the minds of men; the paper and the pamphlet go where the pastor and preacher cannot find their way. At every street corner, and a dozen times along every block of houses, the written word appears to the eye. The child from its cradle is surrounded with some kind of literature. Our education, whether we will or not, goes on with all the growing years, and is in them chiefly remitted to ourselves. And we shall find when all the years are told, that nothing has so moulded and fashioned our inner lives—so made us what in the end we shall be—as reading.

Read we must and will; it is the passion of the present age. And here come up certain questions: What to read? What not to read? When to read? How to read? "Why, we all know that!" say Thomas and Bertha. Dearly beloved, I doubt it; it is also even to be doubted whether your respected parents have considered it a grand part of their duty to give you careful instruction on these points.

"Read, Thomas, or you will be considered a fool," says father. "Bertha, why *do* you read such trash?" says mother. Or, when Thomas and Bertha are fourteen or fifteen, the parents take the matter in hand, and begin to form the young people's taste. Alas! they have seen and read books now for years, and their taste is pretty well formed, or *deformed*, already.

What to read? We say nothing now of the Inspired Book—but answer: Let the first reading be of HISTORY; this lays in the mind a solid foundation of thinking, judging, and comparing; history belongs

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to the domain of the true, and as truth is fundamental to all that is good and worthy of possessing, history should be read, not merely until the mind is in possession of certain facts, but until it has gained a *bent* for sound reading. A young child, given historic reading from its first acquaintance with books, will always love that reading, and develop a literary taste: those whose taste has been vitiated so that they "dislike history," can restore the natural taste for the true by a faithful course of twelve months' historic reading.

Next after history, you should read BIOGRAPHY. You have read of great events, and mighty world-changes: read now of their actors. Happy the child to whom some wise parent has given "Plutarch's Lives!" Read the lives of heroes, literati, philosophers, philanthropists, those masters of the world, who have made history by the out-living of their individualities.

And now when you read of the vicissitudes of the world, and of the inhabitants of the world, you need to know much of the world itself. Its zones and its productions, its tempests, its harvests, its convulsions, its sterility, have done much to make or mar the fortunes of its children. Read travels. Oh, glorious possibilities opened to us in books of travel! We follow Kane into Northern seas; we rush with Irving along the untrodden West; we plunge with Livingstone into the heart of Africa; we march through grim Kamtschatka; we luxuriate in fair islands of the Southern Main. China opens to us its immense domain, and its singular promise. India reveals worlds of mystery. Along the sands of Arabia, and in stony deserts, we follow where once moved a pillar of cloud and flame. Tell me, are you so depraved in taste as not to enjoy travels?

Twin to this line of reading stands the literature of exploration. The earth no longer hides her dead cities: Pompeii and Nineveh, Karnak and Babylon, Mycenæ and Heliopolis; Sicily and Syria and Etruria give up the story of the past. Believe me, it is more interesting than Mrs. Southworth or the "Ladies' Journal of Fashion!"

And now, lest all this solid reading make you plodding, and your mental motion cumbersome, sit at the feet of the world's earliest and sweetest teachers, the poets. Do not try at first Chaucer, Spenser, or Milton: to understand them well, to take them to your heart, you must have read the traditionary lore of Persia and Arabia, and Italy and Greece, the fairy tales of Saxon lands. Read Tennyson, and Longfellow, and Bryant and Jean Ingelow, and Whittier and Wordsworth—and—but time would fail to tell of Campbell and Coleridge and Scott, and many more—and after these you can rise to the sublimer heights of Shakespeare and Milton, and the elder two.

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Thus, by easy and blissful steps, you will find your mind fitted for the serene plains of critical thought, where dwell the greater essayists —and you can read Lamb and Addison and Macaulay, and many more who will fascinate you by the harmony of their speech, the justness, quaintness, and beauty of their thought. Now the mind is well in training, and it enters lovely avenues open on every side, the walks of the world of science, and reads of the wonders of the flower, the treasures of the sea, and the stories of the stones, and the marvels of insect life, the romance of the birds of the air.

But in all this where is the story, the novel, the delight of modern youth? Youth should stand on the threshold of manhood and womanhood, having read something of each of these many things, before the novel is reached. And now, at last, when history has given you truth as a basis of judgment, when biography has instructed you in human nature, and travels have taught you in scenery, and poetry has moulded you in sentiment, and criticism has guided you in discernment, now you are at last able to reject the bad and choose the good, you will find your book your Mentor, not your Circe; take then the hand of the masters in the novel, and enter the charmed circle of romance. Read few novels by fewer authors, and read these often. Don't make friends with the whole throng of light literature specimens; take the books of the great brains, the criterions of novel-writing; take the novels that are prose epics— the kind that in your unread childhood you would have dashed down as dry! Why not mention the magazines and the weekly journals? Simply because these genii of our firesides include in themselves, in their best varieties, all the departments of reading that we have described.

But hark you: there is one Book which is alone a library in itself. He who has not read and re-read the English Bible knows nothing of English literature. There is history, there lie biography, and travels, and philosophy, and poetry, and depths of science, and sweetest romances of youth and love and adventure, that have the added glory of being true. This Bible is a standard of pure taste; it is a measure and model of the English tongue; more than anything else that has been written it permeates all literature; if we fail to read it, to study it, to possess it—then fairest similes, and choicest allusions, and aptest quotations in poet and essayist and novelist and historian fall unapprehended upon our stupid brains. And I mention this to you simply as an intellectual point, without referring to the fact that here flow, as in a blessed fountain, the life-currents of the soul.

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We were all greatly pleased with this little essay, and we began at once to discuss what copies we possessed of such books as we had been recommended to read, or how far we had already pursued the line of reading indicated. We had our meeting that evening out at Fred's farm-house, and Fred suggested that Hester had scarcely dwelt as she might on the need of reading in the line of our business or work. Fred thought that much of the reading of each person who has a business should be about that business. He must read other things for rest, recreation, or general information; but he must read mainly in the line of his own duties. A lawyer should read law, histories of famous cases, the eloquent speeches and pleas of famous counsellors and pleaders, the biographies of the leaders of his profession. So the physician, and the minister, and the artist must read in their own line; so the merchant should read of commerce, manufactures, of leading merchants, and learn by their failure and success. The farmer must read books on farming, on soils, on fowls, domestic animals, horticulture. Fred thought he had made or saved hundreds of dollars by buying books on these subjects, subscribing for magazines or journals, and taking and reading the daily and weekly papers. He showed us four scrap-books, begun when he was a boy—one marked *Grains*, another *Fruit*, another *Flowers and Vegetables*, and the last *Fowls*. In these, each subject was alphabetically divided, and in each division he put down items cut from magazines or papers on that subject. He said that they were invaluable to him, and also a great help to his farm-hands, who read them and availed themselves of the hints therein contained. "I don't follow *all* I read," said Fred; "I use my judgment and experience; nor would I like a fool decry 'book-farming,' because now-a-days all that is worth knowing has got into print, and he who does anything worth the doing is following, whether he knows it or not, what is contained somewhere in a book."

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Among those younger members of the society who took an especial interest in what Hester had asserted to be proper reading were Mrs. Black's two younger children, Thomas and his sister Belinda. They said they had never heard anything of the kind before; that the reading advised was not at all what they had pursued, and they meant to make an entire change. Their frank interest pleased Hester, and she invited them to come and see her library, and she also offered to help them make out a book-list. Her husband, Dr. Nugent, said privately to her that they quite as much needed an *Index Expurgatorius*, and that she should expound to them *what not to read.* Whether it was because of this hint, or of our young friends' innumerable questions, I cannot tell; but Hester did write them a letter on WHAT NOT TO READ, and they were much pleased with it and brought it for me to see. It ran thus:

DEAR THOMAS AND BELINDA:

It was my examination of your book-shelves, my glance at the volumes in your hands last evening, my look at the centre-table where your favorite works lie, that impelled me to write to you about *what not to read.* The press, dear children, has, like other good things, been largely subsidized by the devil. One tells you to read poetry, and then there are poets, as Byron and Swineburn, whom you should not read; and Burns, for part of whose works you will be better, for part worse. Some novels are our teachers, some our destroyers; history is commended to you, and some histories are written in the interests of superstition, infidelity, or vice. What shall you do? Let us have a few rules for our guidance, that we may not gather poisons, nor flowers and fruit whereof worms have eaten out the heart.

Doubtless we never forget: we may think that we forget, but, as in the palimpsest, the successive writings are only overlaid: they remain and may start into clearness. The mind is a phonograph which shall keep and echo the impressions of the past. Books form in us habits of thought which shall live forever with us. Then if our reading is to terminate on the useless or the dangerous, it will be a thousand pities that we ever learned to read.

To begin, then: never read that which, instead of adding to, takes

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from your mental or spiritual strength. Do not let your reading be a succession of examples in subtraction, but in addition to your inner life. Never read a book that robs you of *earnestness*, nor of that high quality of *reverence*, without which there can be no truly elevated character. Never read anything which in one whit robs you of *purity*, for it is only the pure in heart who shall see God. Never read what you are ashamed to be seen reading; the instinct *to hide* is your heart's own sentence of condemnation. But even what is suitable to read at one time is unsuitable at another. Thus you are at school, and you are pursuing daily a certain line of studies. Therefore, my children, when you refresh your minds by reading, you should read in the line of your studies. Let us suppose that you are old enough, and well cultivated enough to read Thackeray, or George Elliot, or William Black; yet if you read these in term time, they fascinate and distract your mind from your scholarly duties. Leave, therefore, these books for vacation, and during the school months read history, travels, biography, science. Let the poetry and the romance go until the holiday.

Do not on Sabbath read those secular books that may be lawful on other days. Read on the holy day those works which shall help you in the holy life. Don't beguile yourself, Belinda, with a religious novel, a piece of namby-pamby stuff, which shall not only bring you no nigher heaven on Sunday, but shall unfit you to study logic on Monday. No moral dish-water for you, my children! Consider also that the morning finds us with the impressions of the night before. So do not let us close with reluctance at midnight on Saturday some entrancing book that we would not read on Sabbath; its image will be projected on our minds during many of the sacred hours, forestalling other and higher impressions. Be heedful also never to read what is popularly called "stuff" or poor writing, even though it may have no evil inculcations, or possibly may *aim* at a certain moral bearing. There is plenty of good writing, standard writing, to be found for the asking, and a production of low literary character weakens the mind. Do not, like "Silas Wegg" and "Mr. Venus," indulge in "floating your powerful minds on tea." Fix it firmly in your brains that the Bible is the measure of excellence; that the Creator of the mind produced a book exactly suited for the nurture of the mind. And, therefore, carefully eschew every work that openly or covertly depreciates the Scriptures; whether it cavils at the inspirations, or the statements, or the doctrines of the Bible, whenever *it* cavils do *you* condemn and drop it. Some works cry "Hail,

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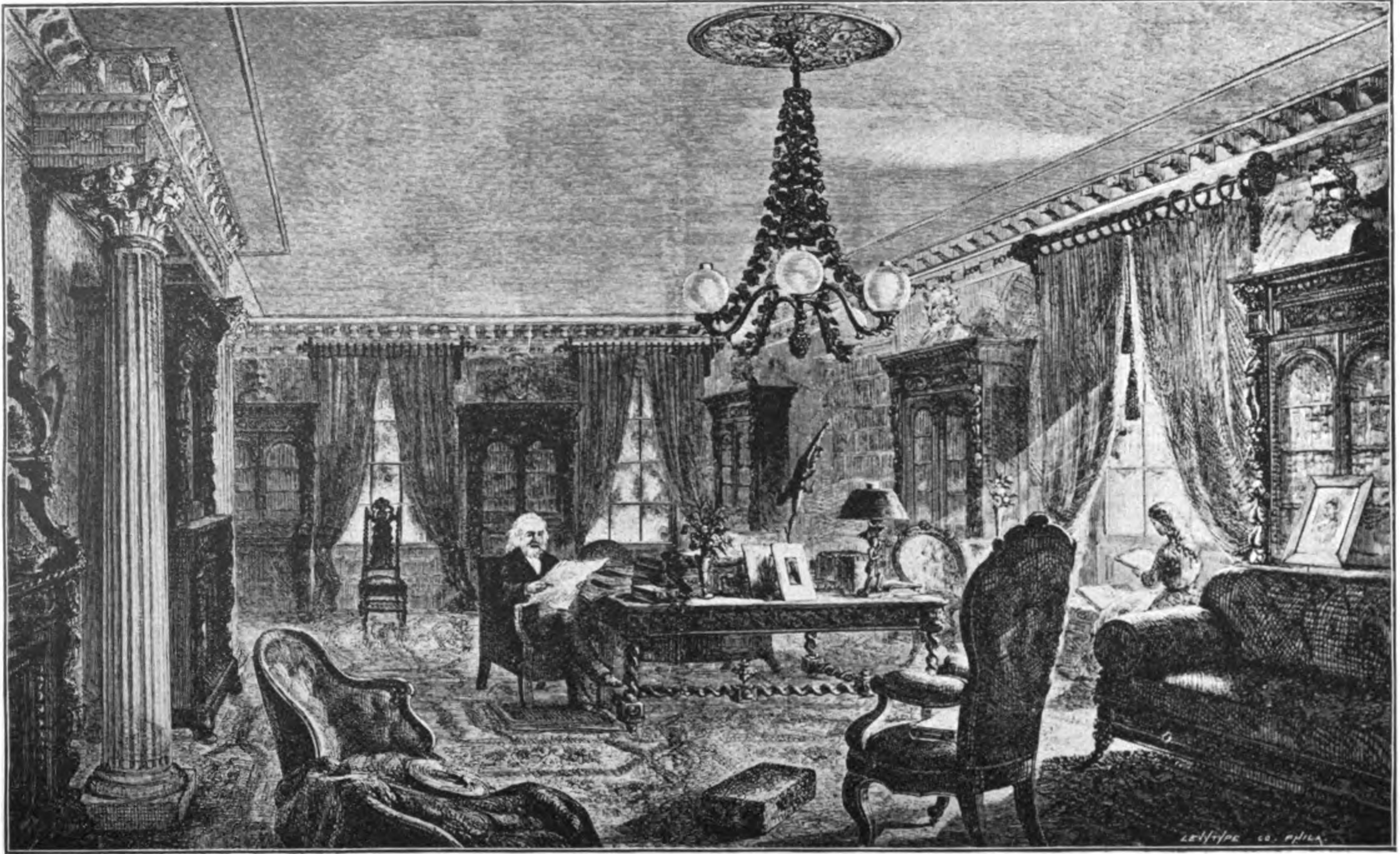

LIBRARY OF AN AMERICAN POET (LONGFELLOW).

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Master!" on the first page, give a Judas-kiss on the second, and on the third you see the shadow of the Roman officers looming behind. Keep your eyes open to danger; don't be lured on hidden rocks by sirens' songs. The easy faith of youth says: "a book? then a good." Not always; it may be, in its "Sunday-best" green, blue or gold, a garb of light; but look warily: if there is a cloven foot under the blue, or a tail peeping out behind, drop it.

Don't read from *curiosity* what good people have condemned. Did you say, Thomas, that you had heard the book was not good, but you wanted to read for yourself, and see if it were bad, and how it was bad? This is not a brave judgment trying all things; this is curiosity and a mean love of evil. Better trust these other people who condemn; they were made before you were. I do not know that you are so eager to try if arsenic and vitriol are dangerous, and how they are dangerous. We show our best judgment, my children, by taking some things on trust. The world is wide, and we cannot investigate everything; a caterpillar on a grape-leaf can investigate the whole of his domain, but the eagle cannot try every field of air. And lastly don't read everything you see, in an insane desire to be called a great reader: be rather a thorough, careful reader. Don't read anything just because you "happened to pick it up," but read what there is a reasonable prospect of finding worth reading.

Your Friend, HESTER NUGENT.

At our next meeting of the Literary Society, which at this time was held at Helen's, an interesting discussion arose as to *when* to read. It happened to be started by the Blacks, who had usually been silent members of the band. Mrs. Winton is secretary, and in reading the report of the last meeting she gave a brief résumé of Hester's essay. This, when the evening was open for discussions, led to the following appeal to Hester, from the youngest Miss Black:

"You have given me," says Belinda, with a little pout, "such an enormous amount of reading to do, and now I should just like to know when I am ever to accomplish it. *My* day has only twenty-four hours in it, and half of them are night."

"Exactly, my Belinda; I was on the very point of telling you When to Read," said Hester, smiling. "Make a habit of read

ing, and read *whenever you can.* Count that day lost when some moments have not been snatched for reading; and you will find this snatching for moments a greater thing than it seems at first sight. After any period of years, if you look back, you will find that much of your most valuable reading has been done at desultory moments, when you might have done nothing at all. Let me be practical: you go to call upon a friend; you find that she will see you 'in a few minutes.' Don't waste that few minutes—they may grow to ten—in looking at your gloves or poking your parasol-top into the carpet, but take a book. All parlors should have books in them, and light enough by at least one window to see to read them. A bookless parlor is a howling wilderness; books—standard books—are more important in furnishing a parlor than card-baskets, vases and knick-knacks of all sorts. Take up a book while you wait, and spend your time in reading. Perhaps your book is a blue-and-gold Tennyson; and in that waiting space you have laid up a jewel in memory's treasures.

"'I hold it truth with him who sings
To one sweet harp of divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

"'But who can so forecast the years,
Or find in grief a joy to match,
Or reach a hand through time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?'

Or possibly, some one has left 'Trench's Study of Words' within reach, and you can set your brain at work upon the far-reaching proposition, that 'language is fossil history.'"

Here Hester paused, feeling that she was occupying too much time, but there was a unanimous cry for her to proceed with the discussion of this question. It was held by Mrs. Burr that it was the very theme belonging to the evening, and likely to be the most useful. And as Hester was still reluctant, it was moved, seconded and voted that fifteen minutes were to be spent

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in hearing Mrs. Nugent explain *When to Read.* As she could no longer decline with a good grace, Hester proceeded, still addressing herself to Belinda Black.

"Again suppose, Belinda, that you are ready to go out walking, and somebody keeps you waiting. Now, if you have the habit of reading, instead of drumming on the window, and characterizing 'somebody' as 'horrid,' you look for that friend, that 'other self,' of all spare moments, a book; and if by chance it is a volume of Jean Ingelow, for poets come most easily to hand in odd hours, and you read one of that sweet singer's dainty bits of still-life painting—of brown butterflies wavering over beds of golden-rod, of dappled shadows flitting over daisy-broidered meads, of flushes of purple heather on a sunny rise, then you go out to walk with eyes awakened to beauty, and heart in harmony with nature, alert to catch the loveliness of flower-set waysides, of lichen-spotted rocks, of vines rioting over gray fences. If perchance you *might have* indulged in folly or gossip, now you, 'in the love of Nature, hold communion with her visible forms.' Have this habit of reading, and you will not suffer your mind to be engrossed with trifles. If reading becomes a second nature to you, a thing without which you cannot live, you will not permit your time to be so taken up beading jackets, or braiding cloaks, or embroidering handkerchiefs—things which in ten years will be forgotten or remembered only as ridiculous—that you have no time for gathering into your own life the garnered treasures of those intellectual kings, who have been ruling it in the world of thought since time began. More than any other, this habit of reading can make us happy and independent, and it goes far in saving us from being swept away in a round of folly, which we name 'fashionable life.'"

"But, dear Belinda, do not consider that you have done your whole duty as a reading person, when you pick up a book in spare moments. You must systematize your work and your

pleasures, so that you shall have solid hours for reading. Some books, they are the weighty and valuable ones generally. will not bear to be read in hasty snatches: you must devote to their perusal uninterrupted seasons. Morning hours are golden hours for reading; the brain is fresh from sleep; the body is rested here let me say to you, my dear girl, that that day is ill spent when the morning does not have some quiet space for reading your Bible, and for prayer; this sanctifies the day; it puts our hours at interest with God, and then he makes them bring forth with usury. Try by system in all your arrangements to get a bright morning hour or two for reading. Evening is another excellent opportunity; our work is done; nothing lies before us but to seek our rest; hurry and excitement are over for the time being; with good print and a good light, here is a happy space for reading. Be careful, then, that you do not make engagements for every evening in the week; keep one or two for reading; and here I would suggest that Saturday evening is an especial time to use in the study of works bearing on the Bible; work on the Sabbath-school lesson; read books or short articles that explain it; let 'Biblical Geography' or 'Antiquities,' 'Josephus,' 'Rawlinson's Illustrations of the Old Testament,' form your library for Saturday night.

"Try these rules for a year, Bertha, and no one will be as surprised as yourself at the amount of reading which you will have been able to do, and no one will be so greatly benefited."

We were all well pleased with these observations.

Miriam said: "I have always found that in every day there are more minutes for reading than at first thought we should expect. During the first two years of my housekeeping, I snatched many minutes for reading while I was cooking my dinner. I kept a book on the kitchen shelf, and I had a little rocking-chair by the window, and could comfortably read many pages in time, which otherwise would have gone by idly. One

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of my neighbors greatly condemned this practice; she said I would have under-done beef, and watery potatoes, and burned soup, if I allowed books in the kitchen, but her prophecy never proved true. I asked her if she never baked a loaf of bread, made a pot of soup, and ironed a shirt all at the same time. She admitted that she did, but said that was not a parallel case. I could not keep dinner and books in mind, as well as ironing and dinner. But I knew I could."

I was in hopes when we started our Literary Society that it would have a good effect upon us all; that it would destroy gossip and slander, by giving us useful and popular subjects of conversation; that it would encourage studiousness and love of reading in the young; substitute improving for frivolous pleasures, and animate our young mothers to instruct their own minds, and so become more valuable teachers for their children, more companionable wives, and more intelligent hostesses. I have not been disappointed in my expectations; I find an interest awakening in sound, standard literature, a desire to improve time, and a new contempt for vapid or flashy reading. Helen is waking up very much to the need and advantage of reading She invited Hester and myself to spend an afternoon with her, and she and Hester had some improving conversation as to *How to Read*. I shall set down the principal points which Hester made on this subject.

Helen said: "I have been trying, Hester, to put into practice what you suggested about snatching time for reading. I feel myself slipping behind the age, knowing little of current topics or new discoveries: a dull entertainer for my husband, and unable to answer a tenth part of my children's questions. So I am resolved to read more, and with my household cares I must do it by snatches. Now how shall I turn these odd moments for reading to good account? I read, and it does not profit me very much: I forget. I read, and then what I read runs out of

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my mind like water out of a sieve. What am I to do? *How shall I read?*"

"Helen, my dear," said Hester, "you are an admirable pupil; you hear, and obey, and develop new problems for yourself. Let me give you two or three short rules concerning *how* to read. Merely to hold a book and assort in your mind certain letters is not reading.

"First: read with *fixed attention*. If you are only reading for five minutes, be capable for that five minutes of being completely absorbed in what you peruse. If you are reading while you are waiting for dinner, do not read wondering 'why that bell don't ring,' or whether the roast will be beef or lamb. If you are reading, because you have a habit of reading and carry a book in your pocket, at your dressmaker's, while you are waiting for her to fit your next gown, don't read, let us say, Irving, on the 'Royal Poet of Scotland,' and muse with half your mind whether the dressmaker will cut your train long enough, your sleeves tight enough, and your basque a proper shape. *Read while you read;* let whatever your mind applies itself to be seized with so firm a grasp that thenceforth it is a part of itself. School yourself in this: all good habits are the result of persistent discipline. Let us say that you read for ten minutes, in 'Rawlinson's Manual,' on the subject of Phœnicia. You close the book; you have no realizing sense of those old Phœnicians; they are to you hardly a name. Open again your book; apply yourself again for ten minutes to those same pages, and if you must renew that process for ten consecutive days, be resolute enough to continue it; and when at last those fathers of ancient mariners, with their line of seaboard cities, the busy trade of Zidon, the splendid merchant-kings of Tyre, the glory of Carthage humming with its industries, are yours, an inalienable mental property, you will have learned how to conquer inattention, you will have mastered your own mind, you will have acquired one method of ruling your spirit.

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"To read is not merely to run the eye over certain combinations of the alphabet: to read is to take a book and be so attent upon it that it becomes your own mental property. You can analyze it, reason upon it, add to it from other sources, make it part of yourself.

"Learn all you can about the authors whose books you read: this will give you a vital interest in your books, and help them to become your friends. *Read with sympathy.* Throw yourself into the age and race of which you read, make the past present, and the distant near; become, for the time being, part of what you are reading. Do not take up the 'Canterbury Tales' and read it with the pervading sense of a modern rocking-chair, an anthracite fire, a new dress with knife-pleatings on the upper skirt, and the near approach of a modern dinner. But let the opening of the book be as the chariots of Amminadab, carrying you back to England's brawling transition age, Becket's tomb a real shrine, the journey thither a giant undertaking and beset with real dangers; hear that burly miller drunk and piping; see the pale scholar, with his Lollard faith, peep under the hood of the pretty prioress, a flirt in holy orders; laugh with the coarse, vain, good-natured wife of Both; behold the Taberd Inn, its sign a knight's wrought cloak, its table deal-boards laid on trestles, its guest-room the great kitchen, with a fire roaring up the chimney, and the joint roasting before it on the spit.

"If you read of Italy, let go your hold on bustling, modern America with its practicalities, and drift away to Tuscan olive slopes and purple vineyards, hills veiled in a blue haze, silver-threaded Arno sliding seaward, and the great, blue Mediterranean embracing all. Read with sympathy, and you will read well. If a work is not worth the trouble of studying sympathetically its age, its race, its author and its subject-matter, then it is not worth the trouble of reading.

"Have also a habit of turning over in your mind and review-

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ing your mental treasures. You come upon some striking thought in Macaulay, and you recall how Froude, or Burton, or Bancroft, or Motley, illustrated the same thought, or referred to the same period. From what fountain-head did the poet draw this draught of elixir? Take the trouble to compare, to criticise, to generalize; feel when you are reading anything that you are your own steward, and that you will call yourself to account some day for these precious things that you are putting in trust.

"Don't be discouraged, Helen, if you forget, and if you cannot comprehend, and if you mingle things which do not belong together. If I am not mistaken, you learned to sew by picking out and 'doing over' many a long seam. Oh, that doing over! How vexatious it was! But it was the parent of all those beautiful dexterously set stitches, which now make you a pattern seamstress. And so, child, go over your reading. Time is not lost if you go over and over again the same thing, if it is a thing worth the going over, and if you are acquiring good mental habits, which shall hereafter make one reading enough."

These various suggestions as to how to read were called forth one after another by Helen's inquiries and remarks; but as they furnish, as a whole, a good set of rules for reading in a manner to improve, I have set them solidly together.

The more I consider the subject, the more am I struck with the important part which books play in our lives.

I was reading lately a work by Hugh Miller, and I was especially impressed by his remark, that he had found among his fellow-workmen that few men who knew how to read became criminals or paupers as compared with the men who did not know how to read; while he could recall almost no instance in which a man, who was fond of good reading, became either a criminal or a pauper. This is a very strong testimony to the morally preservative power of reading, and should encourage

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parents to provide their children liberally with proper, useful and entertaining books, even if to do this they must work harder, or give them plainer clothes. I have long made a practice of choosing books for my holiday and birthday gifts to my little friends. How much they are to be preferred to noisy toys! Their effect upon the child is better, they are more comfortable in the household, and a well-taught child will keep them to add to the happiness of its younger brothers and sisters.

The moulding influence of books upon our minds is illustrated by some remarks of Dr. Guthrie's about the Book of Proverbs. In speaking of education among the Scotch in his childhood, he remarks:

"Having learned our letters and some small syllables, we were at once passed into the Book of Proverbs. In olden time this was the universal custom in all the common schools in Scotland: a custom that should never have been abandoned. That book is without a rival for beginners, containing quite a repertory of monosyllables, and pure Saxon-English undefiled. . . . While learning the Art of Reading by the Book of Proverbs, we had our minds stored with the highest moral truths, and by sage advices applicable to all ages and departments in life; the mind while it was supple received a bent in a direction largely favorable to future well-doing and success. The patience, prudence, forethought and economy which used to characterize Scotchmen—giving occasion to the saying, 'a canny Scot'—by which they were able so often to rise in the world, and distance competitors in the race of life, were, to a large extent, due to their being thus ingrained in youth and childhood with the practical wisdom enshrined in the Book of Proverbs."

The high testimony thus given to the permanently moulding and impressing effect of the study of this inspired Book of Proverbs could in a measure be borne to all good books. In

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them we come in contact with good deeds, good men and noble thoughts; we are taught to study understandingly the works of God; good moves on in them before us to perfect consummation, and evil is portrayed in its course to shame, loss and sorrow; we learn to choose the good, and eschew the evil.

I have heard the morality and thrift of the Icelanders attributed in a large measure to their love of books. Each family owns a few volumes which are read and re-read, and passed from hand to hand. They are a reading people. Their long, cold winters afford almost unbroken time for cultivation of their minds, and the result is a simple, studious, laborious, contented people. In travelling in this country, I have noticed that those working-people of our foreign population, especially among miners who are given to books and study, live better, have better houses, clothes and position in society, than those who spend their leisure time in gossip or amusements. The Welsh have nearly all of them a taste for reading, and a shelf of books in their own houses. The young people are trained to read in their leisure hours, and to take part in their yearly Eisteddfodds, or Literary Exhibitions; and along with this taste for books you find the Welsh miner well dressed, gentlemanly in his manners, possessor of bank-stock, and owner of his Home.

I picked up, this morning, a "Life of Seneca," and noted this remark of his, concerning the education of children: "I would prove to you what eager impulses our little scholars would have toward all that is good, if any one would lead them on." What is a better Leader in a good way than a good book? The child reads in silence: the eye conveys information to us even more impressively than the ear. The child reads his book again and again; the story or the lesson is upon the page, unchangeable in its form, to be referred to, reasoned upon, until it becomes a part of the mind itself. I was conversing the other day with Mrs. Winton on the subject of choosing books for our families She remarked:

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"The little Aphis upon a leaf fills itself and grows like that on which it feeds: so the mind, especially the young mind, fastens upon its books, and they become part and parcel of itself. Now-a-days man might be described as a 'reading animal.' Our children are born into a world full of printed matter: sooner or later they are bound to read. If we do not attract the child toward books by giving him those that are interesting, if we do not form his taste for the pure and good in literature, he will, by-and-by, be wheedled by strangers into reading dime novels and flash papers, and what they call in England 'penny dreadfuls.' We must inculcate sound doctrine concerning reading; we must follow up this teaching by watching carefully over our children's reading: it is a subject worthy our diligent investigation. A child's temptations are many and greater than we in our middle-aged assurance realize. Satan is prompt enough to sow evil reading, illustrated with startling pictures, to beguile the mind and corrupt the taste. We must also remember the homely saying that 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,' and that a full cup cannot be filled fuller. From our children's first Primers we must set ourselves to create in them a sound and healthful taste that would loathe all poisons of the mind. So, before long, as Plato tells us, the child 'praises and rejoices over the good, and receives it into his soul, and becomes also noble and good. He will justly blame and hate the bad now in the days of his youth, even before he is able to know the reason of the thing; and when reason comes, he will recognize and salute virtue as a friend with whom his education has long made him acquainted.'"

Mrs. Burr, who was sitting with us, remarked:

"At this day it is easy to provide reading matter of a good kind for our families. Books and magazines are abundant and very cheap. Postage on printed matter is low, and publishers will generally send their books by mail, post-paid. Expressage

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is carried in most parts of the country at a reasonable rate; bookstores are established in all our towns and large villages, while the extended publication of subscription-books now brings numbers of our most important and valuable works to every man's door. A very little self-denial in laying up a fund to purchase such of these books as will be improving and attractive to the whole family-circle, and useful to each one's especial business, would be the means of furnishing the Home with varied and useful reading, assuring its good taste and refinement, promoting its comfort and its economies, making its older members at once wise and genial, its juniors intelligent and contented, its servants capable and respectable. A Home without books is like a garden without flowers, like a forest without birds or sunshine, like a house without furniture. Out of bookless homes go the majority of the criminals, paupers, vagrants, maniacs and chronic invalids, because the Home well supplied with books has inmates whose leisure is well occupied, and not idle time for Satan to fill with mischief; their minds are well stored, and not left open to preying fancies to drive them mad, or to evil enticements to make them wicked. They are people who know what to do to keep themselves well or to cure themselves when ill: people who have learned how to practise economies to save their money, and activities to earn more of it; people who have learned, from the records of the wide observation of many intelligent writers, the *consequences* of things, the results of diverse courses of conduct, and so do not dash heedlessly on to ruin, but find guide-posts to point them on their way to success in the Books in their Homes."

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CHAPTER IX.

ACCIDENTS IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S VIEWS OF PRESENCE OF MIND AND COURAGE

IN looking over the volumes of my yearly journals, I find frequent mention made of accidents that have occurred in the neighborhood, and among my acquaintance, and of the way in which these have been met. These accidents are forever happening, generally as the result of carelessness or ignorance, but sometimes owing to circumstances over which no one has control, and for which no one is to blame. There is no family but may in any hour, either as a whole or in one of its members, be brought into deadly peril. It is then a serious question: are we cultivating in ourselves a frame of mind which shall enable us to meet these mischances and conquer them? This power over accidents which renders us victors in imminent dangers is called Presence of Mind. The phrase is suggestive: it denotes a mind *at home* in all its powers—wits which are not off, as people say, "wool-gathering," but which are ready to act promptly; a mind which does not greet danger as some people wake up, dazed and stupid, and taking a long while to know where they are, or what they are about. When a person lacks Presence of Mind, the appearance of danger, of need, puts part of their minds to flight. They might but now have been reasonable beings with all their faculties alert, but on the appearance of trial, reason, courage, hope, skill, and quick ness of thought fly from them, terror takes the reins and drives like Phaeton in the chariot of the sun, overturning all things

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Of this excellent quality, Presence of Mind, Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, speaks thus: "Men have done some signal feat of presence of mind, and if asked how they did it, they do not know—they *just did it*. It was in fact done and then thought of, not thought of and then done: in which case it would never have been done at all. It is one of the highest powers of the mind thus to act. It is done by an *acquired instinct*." Here it is not intended that in performing feats of Presence of Mind one does not *think*, for these feats are the product of the most just and logical thinking, which grasps at once an entire situation; but the thinking is done with electric speed, so swiftly that one is unconscious of its process. To act with Presence of Mind in danger, requires in the first place *courage*, because without that, *fear* will paralyze our thinking and acting; there must be no parleying with fear. In the next place a soundly trained reason is required; we must have accustomed ourselves to act logically and with foresight; hope, faith, and self-forgetfulness are also elements in Presence of Mind; in fact all that is good in the mind seems to be present and in active operation, and all that is evil is held in abeyance. These good powers act so instantaneously and so perfectly that they seem rather the exhibition, for the instant, of an unerring *instinct;* but, as Dr. Brown says, it is an "*acquired instinct:*" the product of mental training, of rigid self-control, of a proper cultivation of our powers. Now it is true that some people seem gifted with more natural Presence of Mind than others; that is, those high faculties which make up presence of mind are in them naturally of more active operation; thus they have naturally more courage and greater calmness and less fear and excitement; they are more reasonable and less emotional. But because a person does not originally possess a good degree of Presence of Mind is no reason why he should not acquire it. People do not argue that because they were born poor they must always be poor; but rather, that, not having

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inherited a fortune, they must with more industry set to work to earn one. Every one should face the fact that he is morally bound to have, and exhibit when needed, Presence of Mind: because it may often happen that on the possession by him of this quality, the life, or limb, or fortune of himself or his neighbor may depend. A person of a responsible age, who sees that he is wanting in a quality so valuable, should take shame for the want, and then resolve to possess what he lacks; then by cultivating courage, self-control and reasonable thought, by resolutely repressing in emergencies, great or small, all excitement and frenzy, he will become capable of acting wisely in any difficulty.

I find a very false notion abroad, that, of course, men should have presence of mind, and that without it they are cowards and fit subjects of ridicule; but that it is vastly pretty for young ladies to fall into a faint or a spasm of hysterics, or a state of insane terror as soon as an occasion arises which demands a reasonable exercise of their faculties. Young ladies make a virtue of screaming at a spider; "having a chill at seeing a toad;" going frantic at the sight of a wound, or of blood; boasting how frightened they were at some trifle, and as soon as there is some great emergency, when they should act, they become helpless.

Mothers should feel it a very important part of the training of their children to make them calm and reasonable in emergencies, and helpful in accidents; even young children can show great presence of mind, and if this quality is to be seated firmly in the mind, it should be cultivated from childhood. I remember when Mrs. Black's two youngest children were quite small I called there, and it happened that a beetle was discovered crawling on Belinda's apron; Mrs. Black screamed and made ineffectual dashes at "the horrid bug," and Belinda howled like a Comanche. I put the beetle out of the window.

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"Dear Belinda is so sensitive," said Mrs. Black, proceeding to pet her daughter; "she is frantic at sight of a bug."

"I should prefer," I said, "to have her *sensible*, if sensitiveness is to develop in that style. Is Tom also afraid of bugs?"

"Why, no: he's a *boy*," said Mrs. Black.

"But I cannot see if a bug is dangerous that it should show any respect to his sex; if it is poisonous, it would poison him."

"Oh, it isn't poisonous, but—it looks so," said Mrs. Black.

"Well, has not Tom as good an eye for *looks* as his sister? If the *bug* is such a gorgon's head as to throw all beholders into spasms, Tom should succumb, as well as Belinda. Excuse me, Mrs. Black, I think the trouble is just here, that Belinda has found out that you expect her to shriek at a 'bug,' and that you regard it a genteel and praiseworthy act in her, quite becoming an embryo lady; but Tom knows his boy-mates would laugh at him soundly for such folly, and so shows common-sense. As to the bug, it is not ugly at all: a beetle is beautiful." I saw the beetle crawling on the window-ledge and took it in. "See this shell; the wing-covering is polished more highly than the finest rosewood, and is of the exact *cuir* color which is now all the rage; see how daintily these black spots are arranged upon it; Belinda, look at its bright eyes; and this pair of curved claws in front of its mouth serve to seize and hold its food; pray, child, what would you do without hands to hold your bread and butter? Look at its feet, with little prickly points to hold fast and climb by; and see here, under these brown, shining shell wings are a pair of flying wings, fine, delicate red silk, stretched on tiny folding frames, as your fan on its sticks, or your parasol on its wires. You could easily hurt it, if you were so cruel, but it could not possibly hurt you. Now, touch its smooth back; now put it out of doors."

Indeed, Belinda had become quite interested in the beetle, and she has never feared one since; but her training had culti-

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LEARNING TO READ.

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vated frantic screaming at all creatures of the kind, and this came out quite to her mother's mortification soon after.

There was a wedding at our church, by far the most splendid wedding ever in our town. We were all invited, and Mrs. Black in all her glory occupied a front seat, with little Belinda flounced and ribboned wonderfully. In the very midst of the ceremony, Belinda espied a caterpillar crawling up her dress-waist. Instead of picking it off, or asking her mother to do so, she gave vent to unearthly yells, which startled every one in the church, and stopped for the time the marriage ceremony. Mrs. Black, in high terror, turned to see what ailed Belinda; plucked off the intruder, and placed her hand over the youngster's mouth. All in vain; if it became a daintily-dressed little lady to howl at caterpillars, Miss Belinda meant to howl thoroughly; she kicked and shrieked, and was carried out of the church purple in the face, and her mother was too much overcome by excitement and mortification to return to the wedding party, while the whole town was full of condemnations of "that dreadful child." Why dreadful? She was acting as she had been trained to act.

Who could expect a child behaving in this way at seven to display at thirteen the Presence of Mind of a little girl I saw near Niagara? She had been left in charge of the opening to the natural curiosity called the *Devil's Hole.* On the counter were a few jars of candy; she had with her a child of two and a half; the rear door of the shop opened upon a wide table-rock which overhung the river, boiling perhaps a hundred feet below, over its stony bed, in prodigious rapids. While the girl was receiving the fees of a party about to descend the ladders at the right of the rock, the little child escaped by the back-door. The party gone, the young nurse saw the child running toward the verge of the rock; to call, or to pursue, would ensure its destruction; she grasped a jar of candy, and shouting "candy!" poured its

contents out upon the rock. The child looked back; not six feet from destruction it paused; could not resist the lavished sweets, and came skipping back to share them! Here was a fine instance of Presence of Mind: the self-control which repressed the dangerous call or pursuit; the reason which seized the temptation strongest to the fugitive, which in a flash argued out the dangers and the probabilities of the case, and acted on the instant, when to delay would have been death.

Cousin Ann has always been careful to cultivate Presence of Mind in her children. Once when Fred was small I was there, and the door of the kitchen stove falling open, the coals rolled out upon the floor and began to burn. Fred, about three years old, began to scream. "Hush!" said Cousin Ann, calmly; "put the fire out, *and scream afterwards*." She put a little pail of water into his hand, and made him pour it over the fire, and then gather the quenched coals on a shovel and put them in the hearth.

"It is true," she said, "that the floor is a little more burned than if I had left Fred to shriek and had poured on the water myself; but I have taught him how to put out a fire, and that in emergencies it *is better to act than to cry*."

I replied: "The course you took is better for many reasons, as I have noticed that, in families where Presence of Mind is cultivated, accidents are few: for the calm, reasonable courage which can meet an accident wisely, is the quality which will usually prevent their occurring."

Cousin Ann and myself were going from her house into town one day walking, when, as we passed a neighbor's farm-house, a woman rushed out, crying, "Murder! Murder! he's dying." Cousin Ann dashed in, and I followed her. On a chair, just within the door, sat a fine young man; an axe lay beside him; the floor was covered with blood which spouted from his leg just below the knee. He had drawn up his trowser-leg over

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the knee, but nothing else had been done, and his face was growing white as his life-blood poured away. On the instant Cousin Ann snatched from the mother's waist her apron with wide tape-strings, tore off a string, and proceeded to draw it round the leg about an inch above the wound.

"Bring me a little stick, Sophronia!" she cried; and twisting this under the tied tape, she turned it around so as to increase the pressure and check the flow of blood.

In a moment or two the bleeding had stopped. The mother, who had had presence of mind to do nothing but talk, wanted to talk loudly.

"He was cutting wood! He struck himself! Oh, me! I thought he was dead!"

"Be quiet," said Cousin Ann, with authority. "Bathe his face with vinegar and water: he is faint. Sophronia, find a fresh egg at the barn and whip it up with a little sugar: he needs something to strengthen him."

Meanwhile, she removed his shoe and stocking; bathed away the blood; helped the mother draw the injured man's rocking-chair away from the sight of the stained floor, arranged his wounded leg safely; quietly told a boy, who was passing, to send a doctor from the village to dress the wound; bade the woman set her room in order; gave the young man the egg; and having in these few moments saved his life and restored him to comfort, she sat by him fanning him, while he slept from exhaustion, until the doctor arrived. Had the poor mother been left to her own device of screaming "murder," her son would have been murdered indeed.

When I first hired Martha, she seemed so reserved and "dour," as the Scotch say, and had such a blunt style of speaking, that I hardly wanted to keep her. An accident happened one day which showed me her worth. Our next-door neighbor dashed to our kitchen, crying: "My Harry's in the well!"

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"Arrah! and are you *taving* him there?" cried Martha, darting out of the kitchen with me after her. The well was between the two yards. "Saze the handle, miss," cried Martha to me, letting herself over into the well and catching the rope. I caught the windlass, and cried to the mother to hold it with me. Martha, with great Presence of Mind, aided her descent by the side of the well, so that her weight might not come fully upon my arms. Reaching the water she caught the child as he came to the surface for the last time. "Fasten the windlass, miss!" shouted Martha; "and drop me the end of a clothes-line to send him up by." In fact, her promptitude saved the child's life. He came up insensible, but we brought him to after a while.

I remember a rule which I have heard Mrs. Winton give her children: a paraphrase of some of Mentor's advice to Telemaque. "Be very much afraid of danger when you are out of it; when you are in it be fearless; never give up." She was always very careful to teach her children to meet accidents with calm judgment. I happened to be there one day when her second little son nearly cut off the top of his thumb with a hay-cutter. Mrs. Winton joined the dissevered thumb, which held only by a narrow bit of skin, and held it exactly and firmly in place. She held the child on her lap, keeping the wound joined and clasped by her hand so that he could not move it. She said, calmly, "My dear, screaming will not cure your thumb, but keeping quiet may save it. The doctor will be here in a few moments and sew this thumb together, and with care it may be as good as ever. Come now, courage; you do not want a disfigured hand." The child took heart, carried himself bravely, and his thumb healed with hardly a scar.

Mrs. Winton's Presence of Mind was of much service to Miriam's little Dora. Mrs. Winton and I entered the house one day to find all in confusion: Dora had scalded her little arm

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sadly with steam, from the wrist to the elbow, and was almost in convulsions with pain. The accident had just happened. Mrs. Winton looked hastily to see that the skin was not broken; ran into the kitchen, where everything was always in order and handy; and in an instant mixed half a cup of flour and the same amount of table-salt into a thick paste with cold water. Miriam has a wall-pocket for string; another for paper. Mrs. Winton from the latter took a paper-bag, tore it open, spread on the paste, and running back to the sitting-room bound the plaster over the whole arm and hand, tied it on with string, wrapped over it her pocket-handkerchief, and bound over that a napkin. In three minutes Dora's cries were calmed. She began to catch her breath softly, and look about for the cause of her late agony. Exhausted as she was with pain and terror, she was evidently becoming relieved. Mrs. Winton took her on her lap; held the burned arm extended, with a little upward inclination to keep the blood from pressing into it. She bathed her face with bay-water, and began to sing her a little song. In ten minutes Dora was out of pain, and in five more she was asleep.

"Where did you learn such a magical remedy?" I asked.

"I invented it from two old ones," she said. "I have had flour and water highly recommended for burns, and also wet salt: both are of some use. I burned my own hand badly one day, and concluded to unite the two remedies. I find the flour-and-salt paste, laid on plentifully, not so thin as to run, and not so thick as to dry quickly, always effectual where the skin is unbroken: it relieves pain in two or three minutes; cures pain entirely in ten. The paste is always most useful spread on brown paper. When Dora wakes, put on a fresh paste, exposing the arm to the air as little as possible; at bed-time, change the paste again: keep her arm extended and slightly raised. To-morrow morning, wrap it in linen, wrung out of sweet

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or castor-oil, and you will have no further trouble with the burn."

I suppose that there is no more general cause of accidents than fire. Accidents by fire have become more numerous since the introduction of coal-oil for lighting—not that the oil is dangerous if properly used, but it is constantly so improperly used. Servants and housewives too are continually using it for lighting fires: pouring a little on the kindling to make a quick blaze. The flame darts up into the can, and there is an explosion. I have even heard of a person sprinkling powder from a keg upon a slow fire to expedite it: it is needless to say that the fire, leaping, followed the rash hand back to the keg to the destruction of reckless person and room also. Helen's Hannah had this terrible habit of using kerosene. Helen used to say that she expected every morning to hear a shriek, and see Hannah running about the house all on fire. She got her lesson, however, in an easier fashion. Helen's Tom was ill, and I went to the kitchen to make gruel. Hannah, in her zeal to quicken the cooking, took a bottle wherein was a little kerosene, and sprinkled it on the fire. Not knowing what she was doing, I turned just in time to see the flame dart back into the bottle. Hannah flung it from her, thus sprinkling herself with the flaming oil. Fortunately, there were but a few drops in the bottle. I caught up a bucket, which stood full of water, and dashed it over Hannah, and then catching her by the shoulders pressed her upon the floor on her face, and wrapped the kitchen carpet over her; she was spared other harm than the loss of her apron and her dress-sleeves. The unlucky bottle, breaking on the hearth, consumed the rest of the small quantity of oil without damage. Hannah has been judicious in her use of kerosene ever since. A fruitful cause of lamp explosions is the use of lamps in which the oil has burned very low; or, people do not trim the wicks properly, and red-hot snuff falls from them;

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others screw a lamp-top on poorly, allowing room for the air to sweep in if the lamp is moved. If lamps are filled too full, or until they run over, there is great danger of an explosion: nor should they ever be filled by lamp or fire-light, or near a stove. No housewife should retire for the night until she has looked after the state of the fires in the house, made sure that no wood or cloth is in a position where it may fall on a stove or fire, and has seen to it that there is a supply of water on hand in the pails. One should not go to bed with pitchers and buckets empty, for no one can know what dangers may call for water before daybreak. The old saw, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," should be written in every kitchen.

How many fires have originated from the insane practice of preparing kindling for the morning, and leaving it over-night on the top of the kitchen-stove, where fire is yet burning when the family retire! the wood breaks into a flame, falls apart, rolls on the floor; the dry pine boards are soon in a blaze, and the family are presently homeless. Another frequent cause of burned houses is the leaving a frame of clothes beside the kitchen-stove at night to finish drying or airing; some yielding of the floor, puff of wind, the running against the frame of cat, dog or rat, topples it over, and in a few minutes the burning garments are scattering destruction. Millions of dollars' worth of property have been destroyed by carelessness in taking up and disposing of *ashes*. Ashes should *always* be removed in the morning before the fire is lit: this should be an invariable rule; the ashes are then cold and safe. Ashes should never be put in a *barn*, wood-shed, beside a fence, or by any wooden buildings. Wood-ashes will retain a central heat, and communicate fire long after they are supposed to be quite extinct. It is good economy to dig a square ash-pit, build a brick wall four feet high about it, and cover it with a sloping roof; if the under-side of the roof-boards are covered with refuse tin, or with a thick wash of salt

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and lime, so much the better; if this ash-house is twenty feet from any building, safety in this direction is secured. If the place for the ashes is so far from the house, or in so exposed a situation that it is difficult or dangerous for a person to go to it in cold or stormy weather, or for a person suffering from a cold, then there is a constant temptation to leave ashes about in wooden pails or tubs, or to wait until late in the day to remove them from the stove or to throw them out in heaps near the house, whence hot cinders could be blown to the buildings. I have myself known of the ruin of one hundred thousand dollars' worth of property from various fires occasioned by hot ashes, and I dare say if the statistics of fires referable to this cause alone should be obtained, the result would be appalling. In the country the farmer wants the ashes for his ground; the house-wife needs them for lye: such an ash-house as has just been mentioned could be made by any farmer and his lads in spare hours, and would secure them from the dangerous *ash-barrel* which may be the ruin of his whole fortune. My servant Martha's sister lost a snug little house and nearly all that it contained by taking ashes from her stove at noon, which should have been removed before breakfast, and adding to this the taking them in a wooden pail. An hour after she found the pail on fire, fallen apart, its blazing staves scattered around her kitchen and on the rag-carpet. Instead of closing doors and windows, dragging up the carpet, and fighting the fire with a bucket of water, she fled screaming from the place, leaving the door wide-open, which fanned the flame beyond control. People whose carelessness allows a house to catch fire are generally those who have no presence of mind to use proper means to extinguish it. That was a wise law of stout old Peter Stuyvesant, Governor of New York in the Dutch times, which fined every man who allowed his premises to take fire, and then he expended the fine for buckets, hooks, ladders and other means of putting out fires.

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Speaking of fires I am reminded of people's carelessness in the use of matches. They leave matches in closets near chimneys, or in places exposed to a strong sun-heat, so that they may be ignited by what is called spontaneous combustion. Matches are left on shelves, in paper-boxes, where mice can get among them; they are dropped around the floor, and swept into dusty cracks and corners; a burnt match with a red-hot end is dropped into a wood-box, or on a floor covered with matting. People carry matches about in their pockets, and leave them hanging up in a dusty coat, and then wonder why fires are so frequent. When we think of the millions of dollars yearly lost in fires, we must be sure that there is inexcusable carelessness somewhere. A great fire like that in Chicago or Boston astounds us, but yearly quite as much property is lost in isolated fires. Scattered over all the country one sees the blackened ruins of what were handsome or comfortable farm-houses and fine barns. The phrase, "loss covered by insurance," seems to deceive people; "loss transferred by insurance" would be a truer term, for the loss *is* a loss, and the dollars burned up are dollars gone, lost entirely out of the general purse. The contributions of the many on insurance policies have saved the one loser from ruin, the loss is spread out more widely, and so is less felt by a single individual; but it is a real loss of property just as much as when one reads "no insurance."

Nothing is more alarming than an outbreak of fire; almost no accident seems so calculated to "turn one's head," as people say; consequently the damages of fire are greater, because people fail in fighting it properly at its beginning. Air should be shut out from the burning place as much as possible; if it is too late for individuals to fight the monster with buckets of water, then shut the fire in closely, and begin to remove furniture until hose can be brought. The most coolly systematic meeting of a fire that I ever knew was the case of a widow near our village.

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She returned from church one afternoon with her three grown daughters and a ten-year-old boy, and found her house on fire; the fire being in the kitchen, and under such headway, that their efforts would be impotent to check it. Mrs. G. saw this at a glance; she bid the boy run back the mile to the village and call the fire company; in a moment closed the kitchen shutters and laid a rug against each closed door to shut off all air. One daughter then set herself to rescue the goods in the sitting-room next the kitchen; the mother and the two other girls took each a bed-room. They did not waste a second: each taking a sheet from the bed, emptied the bureau-drawers and the closets into it, tied the corners tightly and flung it from the window; the other sheet was in like fashion tied about the bedding and flung out; next the carpet was pulled up, the curtains wrapped in it, and these went out the window. Two of the girls then ran out of doors, dragged these rescued goods to a place where the wind blew to and not from the fire, and piling them up spread a carpet over them. Two and two they then carried out their trunks; and while the three girls began on the furniture, the mother, who had emptied the room over the kitchen, deluged it well with all the water she could bring. They left, so promptly that it seemed done by instinct, things which were of small value, or readily broken; they threw nothing which would break out of a window, and carried down-stairs no soft bundle which could be thrown out. When help came, the house was pretty well emptied; and was finally saved with the loss of the kitchen, the scorching of the room above it, and the burning of the wash-shed. Mrs. G. told me that they would have saved all their goods in complete order, even if the house had been lost. It is the part of prudence always, except in severe freezing weather, to have plenty of water in every bed-room; and if there is a bath-room, one or two buckets of water should be always standing there ready for use. I find in my journals a deal

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about accidents by fires; but fire is not the only cause of accidents by any means.

In a house full of children how many accidents are occasioned by falls! Helen says it seems as if some of her half-dozen were tumbling off chairs or down-stairs continually; children should not be encouraged to make much ado over small matters, but falls where the head or back receives a heavy blow are apt to be dangerous; the head should in such a case be plentifully bathed in cold water; a few drops of ammonia in water should be administered, heat or friction applied to the hands and feet, and the child should not be allowed to sleep within two or three hours; its attention should be awakened, and drowsiness kept off by all possible means; if nausea follows a fall, a physician should be at once sent for.

Indeed, the accidents which befall children are innumerable. I find record how Master Tom undertook to pound up glass with a stone and was nearly frantic from a bit which got into his eye. The case was desperate; Tom, roaring lustily, wanted to shut his eye and rub it with his fist, thus making bad worse; moreover, not having been trained to *obey*, we could do nothing with him. I was obliged to tie his arms down with a towel; then Hannah held him firmly back over my lap; I drew the eye open, lifting the upper lid, and Helen, by my directions, syringed it thoroughly; I then concluded the most of the glass must be out; I slipped three flaxseeds under the lid, tied the eye up with a napkin wet in cold water, put Tom in bed in a dark room, and sat by him telling him stories until he fell asleep; his eye was bloodshot and needed a shade for a few days, but received no permanent injury. Another of Tom's accidents was when Hester and I had him up in the mountains with us. There was no doctor within ten miles. Tom, who is a tease, teased a dog and had his thumb severely bitten. It was in hot weather, and visions of hydrophobia flashed upon us as soon as he screamed. Hester

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seized his hand and made a swift, sharp cut above the bite in the fleshy part of the lower joint of the thumb, holding his hand firmly downwards; she then washed the wounds thoroughly in water pretty strong with ammonia, and made him take some ammonia water; after this she gave him a hot soda-water bath, administered a good dose of magnesia, and put Tom to bed, keeping the cloths on his hand wet with ammonia water. Her patient complained bitterly of this heroic treatment, but Hester told him that any treatment was better than hydrophobia: that if there was poison in his system there must be help to throw it off, and among other good results she hoped her doctoring would produce a carefulness about teasing dogs. I do not know how dangerous Tom's bite might have been, but he never suffered any other ill effects from it than Hester's style of cure.

I have always found ammonia very excellent for bites and stings, and of late years I have used, with very good effect, *cosmoline* for the bites of spiders and poisonous insects.

While Hester and I were at the mountains at this time we had another patient; a young lad who was working on a barn roof had a sunstroke. All was confusion; some declared that he was dead; others shouted for brandy; we had him laid in the shade and poured very cold spring water over his head and wrists; I pounded some ice, folded it in a long towel, and, the men raising the patient, I placed it under his spine and the back of his neck; Hester rejected the proffer of brandy, administering instead ammonia water, and bathing his face and neck in iced bay-water; she also had the men rub his feet vigorously; under this treatment our patient recovered very speedily.

I remember that was a very hot summer, and one day I saw an instance of Mrs. Burr's readiness in meeting danger. I was sitting with her in the sewing-room up-stairs, and her servant was ironing in the kitchen; Mrs. Burr glanced from the window,

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then sprang like a flash to the entry above the kitchen stairs and cried: "Mary! shut that outside door!" Her voice was loud and peremptory.

Mary began: "Why, ma'am—"

"Shut that door!" repeated Mrs. Burr, in a tone that admitted no disobedience, and the door slammed shut.

"Are the other doors shut? Shut the window."

Down came the window, and then Mary's voice: "Why, ma'am, it's that burning hot—"

"I dare say," said Mrs. Burr; "and there's a mad dog in the yard," and she went down to assure herself about the doors. In a few minutes more we heard two shots, and the dog lay dead. The open kitchen door was in his direct track, and of this Mrs. Burr thought as she saw him turn towards her gate; her quickness in ordering it shut by Mary, who was standing beside it, perhaps saved the maid's life.

"Oh," said Mary, overcome, "what a mercy I shut it when I did!"

"Hereafter," replied Mrs. Burr, "promptly do as you are told, and make your objections afterwards."

I have observed that those who are remarkable for Presence of Mind, for courage in danger, are very little likely to be injured in the efforts which they make for themselves and others; their fearlessness, which in a large measure arises from unselfishness, their calm bravery and good judgment, teach them to do the right thing in the right way; so that, for instance, while a person who goes wild with terror at sight of some one in flames is often burned with them, the possessor of Presence of Mind will save both parties with but small injury. So I once saw a slender young woman stop a frightened horse, soothe him, tie him securely, and relieve two ladies in the buggy, who, while they might have controlled the animal if they had controlled themselves, were only by their shrieks adding to the difficulty. She

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who came to the rescue might very properly have pleaded her health as an excuse for doing nothing, but knowing what was to be done, and calmly fearless, she prevented a serious accident, and that with entire safety to herself. I think many women positively make a virtue of being nervous about horses; they will leap from a carriage where a horse is curveting or frightened, and in the leap get serious damage, when by keeping quiet no harm would have ensued; or, they will snatch at the reins, grasp a driver's hands, scream in a manner to increase a horse's panic, and so occasion a disaster which quiet might have hindered.

Miriam several times showed great presence of mind in trying circumstances, as I remember. As she opened her front-door entering her home one afternoon, her little boy met her, his gingham apron all in flames. Without a word she threw him on his face, and began rolling him rapidly on the hall-floor, until reaching for a rug lying by a door, she wrapped that around him, and presently extinguished the fire. At another time she was buying shoes in a shop, when a sound of choking was heard from the next room. The woman who waited on her looked about, and cried: "My baby's dying!" Miriam sprang with her into the next room, and saw a child of a year old on the floor strangling. She caught the little thing up under her left arm, holding its head partly downwards, and pressed two fingers of her right hand firmly downward and backward in the hollow of the throat: this forced the lower part of the throat to close, and instantly the cause of the choking, a copper cent, which the little one had got about half way down its throat, came up. This pressing on the *outside* of the throat at the hollow, making the pressure downward and backward, is much better, in case of a child strangling upon any half-swallowed substance, than the ordinary fashion of thrusting the finger into the mouth, which usually crowds the obstruction farther down.

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Too much care cannot be exercised in keeping away from young children marbles, bits of money, thimbles or other such substances, wherewith they might choke themselves. Astounding as the statement may seem, I once saw in a grave-yard the graves of five infants of one mother, all of whom had come to their death by choking with a thimble. Perhaps I misjudged that unhappy mother—whose losses finally made her insane—and she had *not* been careless in this unhappy series of disasters, but I thought of the verse in Proverbs: "Though thou bray a fool in a mortar with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." It is dangerous also to give a child paper to play with, because it is apt to fill its mouth with paper, and presently to choke on the wet lump. Too much care cannot be exercised over the things given to a young child to amuse it. An acquaintance of mine carelessly handed a child a piece of green worsted cloth. After some time she saw that the babe's mouth was discolored from sucking this rag; in fact, the child was poisoned with the dye, and after a two months' illness narrowly escaped with its life. Speaking of poison, reminds me that we should keep on hand some simple antidote. The whites of raw eggs, also mustard and water, are often useful where poison has been swallowed. When I was spending a winter with my half-sister in New York, her daughter-in-law rushed into the kitchen, crying that she was poisoned. She had carelessly mistaken a poison given her for a bath, and used it internally. My sister was baking sponge cake, and had by her a plate of whites of eggs, which she was about to beat. She promptly administered these, and saved the young woman's life.

Of late I have been urging upon my young friends the importance of training their children in habits of self-control, in the exercise of Presence of Mind, that they may act resolutely and bravely in emergencies, and meet accidents with calmness. It is not worth while to wait for some great crisis to occur to

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give this training: begin it in little things. When anything is dropped or broken, let the damage be repaired promptly and properly: thus one is accustomed to think reasonably and judiciously. The screaming and excitement over small misadventures, which begin often as a mere affectation, end in a real incapacity for rendering effective service in time of need. I have noticed that those who exaggerate in their views and accounts of things, by accustoming their imagination to supersede their judgment, end in becoming timid, nervous and helpless in a crisis. There is no greater folly than to educate children into cowardice. Parents do this by showing cowardice themselves, by allowing their children to be terrified with foolish tales, or made the victims of cruel jokes, or frightened to render them obedient. Train them to look reasonably at all things, to see that in every danger or difficulty there is something that can be done, if it is only to keep calm and wait; and let them learn that the real point of danger is when the mind has lost the mastery of itself, when reason has given the reins to fear or to imagination. How many evils are intensified, or real dangers brought out of imaginary dangers, by this wicked excitement! A lady in our village was ill, when her nurse rushed in, crying, "Harry's drowned! he fell in the creek!" The unfortunate mother was thrown into a congestive chill, and in a few hours was dead; while her child, who had been pulled out of the water as quickly as he fell in, had no harm but a wetting. If the child *had* been drowned, the news should not have been so hastily carried to the sick mother; while if he had seemed drowned, and had really been near to death, vigorous efforts, as rubbing, wrapping in hot blankets, and the other known remedies, might have resuscitated him.

I have heard people argue that they were not to blame for lacking Presence of Mind, and so failing to furnish a proper conduct in cases of accidents. They say that the courage,

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reason, decision, firmness, which compose Presence of Mind, are gifts of God, not to be created by human effort, and he who lacks them is rather to be pitied than blamed. Now, I reply, that all people, who are not idiots or insane, have in them the germs of all these qualities; these are implanted in their minds by God; and whether weak or strong in their inception, they are capable of increase by cultivation, and they will dwindle if they are not fostered; therefore, he who lacks these powers is guilty in the lack, inasmuch as he has not made the best of himself, has not developed the good that was in him, and by so failing, has really developed fear, feebleness and idle excitement. Some people, especially those of delicate constitutions, are victims of nervous tremors and terrors; they tremble and grow faint at a cry of pain, at sight of blood, at the sound of a fall; only by painful efforts can they school themselves to conquer these predispositions. They who out of these natural disabilities develop courage, and helpfulness, and calm self-control should be crowned as true heroes. Every effort toward this attainment of Presence of Mind they will find worth the making in the good they do, the evil they avoid doing, and the satisfaction of conscience. Every effort will, in its very painfulness, lift them nearer to rigid self-control. "The angel of martyrdom is brother to the angel of victory."

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CHAPTER X.

RELIGION IN THE HOME.

WHAT AUNT SOPHRONIA HAS TO SAY OF FAMILY PIETY.

ONE Sabbath evening in June, I was sitting on my front piazza, reading, when a neighbor of mine, with his two little boys, returning from a walk, passed me. The youngest child called to me for some roses that grew in my yard, and I bid him help himself. The three then came in and sat down near me on the steps. After a little general conversation, I said to my neighbor:

"Mr. Carr, you have a promising family of boys growing up around you, and I am sorry to see that you do not take them to church, and bring them up in the ways of piety."

"Why, Miss Sophronia," said Mr. Carr, "I don't believe in religion!"

"Is it possible!" I replied. "But you are always esteemed as a very industrious, honest, generous, law-abiding man."

"Certainly," said Mr. Carr; "I hold to *morals*, but not to religion. I believe in abiding by the laws."

"Suppose you were in a country where stealing was not contrary to law, would you steal?"

"Why, no; I have a principle against stealing."

"As you abide by the laws, and do not believe in religion, I suppose you adhere to the statute-book, and not to the Bible."

"That's about it."

"Did you never consider that these morals in which you believe are originally laid down in the Bible as a part of re-

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ligion, that our statute-books are modelled on the Bible laws. prohibiting what it prohibits, and for the most part following its penalties? Countries which have no Bible, no Christian religion, have no pure code of morals, no righteous statute laws. If you will cast over in your mind the present state of the countries in the world, Christian and unchristian, if you will run over in your thoughts the history of the world, you will see that morality and justice have spread among nations just in proportion as Bible-light has spread. It is a mere matter of facts and statistics, not of theory. Contrast Germany and Turkey, England and India, Holland and Siam, the United States and Africa. Then draw the lines a little closer, and look at those countries where the Bible has been free in the vulgar tongue and where it has been hidden, and contrast the intelligence, the purity of morals, the statistics of education, the number of murders, the proportion of lawful marriages, the character of truthfulness. Take the same country with a free Bible and freedom of worship, and without—Italy, for instance, in these two cases—and see when was the march of improvement, the increase in wealth, power, unity and credit among other nations."

I knew my neighbor was a reading man, and that he boasted of a good historic library.

He pondered a while, hesitating. "Yes," he said, "it does seem that morals and religion, civilization and freedom in worship, the Bible and good laws, go hand in hand. But, Miss Sophronia, we might look at religion as an education, which states need to bring them up to a point of development where they can look out for themselves, as a lad needs schooling, and then quits school."

"But the mind is either going forward or backward; it cannot stand still: if it does not advance, it will retrograde. Suppose on leaving school the boy never looks at a printed word, never writes a word, lets drop the acquirements which he has made.

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what will become of him?—he will brutalize. If the state in all its individuals cuts loose from religion after it has risen by religion, then anarchy will follow. If states rise by God's law, they stand by it. You say you hold to morals, but do not adhere to the Bible. The morals to which you cling are a part of the Bible. Let us take the Moral Law. Here are the first two Commandments about worshipping God, and not worshipping images: what do you do with them?"

"Nothing. That's religion, and I just let it alone."

"Take the next—against profanity."

"Well, Miss Sophronia, swearing is useless and vulgar; it is a mark of blackguards, common to men drunk, and men lying, and men in a passion. It is also forbidden by the laws of some states. I'm against swearing, as a matter of decency and good order."

"Try the fourth—about keeping the Sabbath."

"Well, now, Miss Sophronia, I think every man should keep it as he pleases. If I take a walk, I don't hurt my neighbors by doing it. If men prefer recreation to church, why let them have recreation. Why cannot Sunday be left like any other day in the week, and let those who want to go to church on it go?"

"If Sabbath is left like any other day in the week, then our business places must be full of traffic, buildings must be going up, boats and cars must be running, the farmer who prefers to work can keep his hands haying, harvesting or ploughing, all places of amusement must be open, peddlers crying their wares, organ-men grinding, auctions going on, factories working. Consider in such a case that all men who are employés must lose their Sabbath or their situations; they may have a conscience about the matter, and desire to keep the Sabbath holy, but they *cannot*, unless they throw up their business, and stand open to beggary. All people who have leisure, and desire to go to church, would find their services invaded by noise: they would

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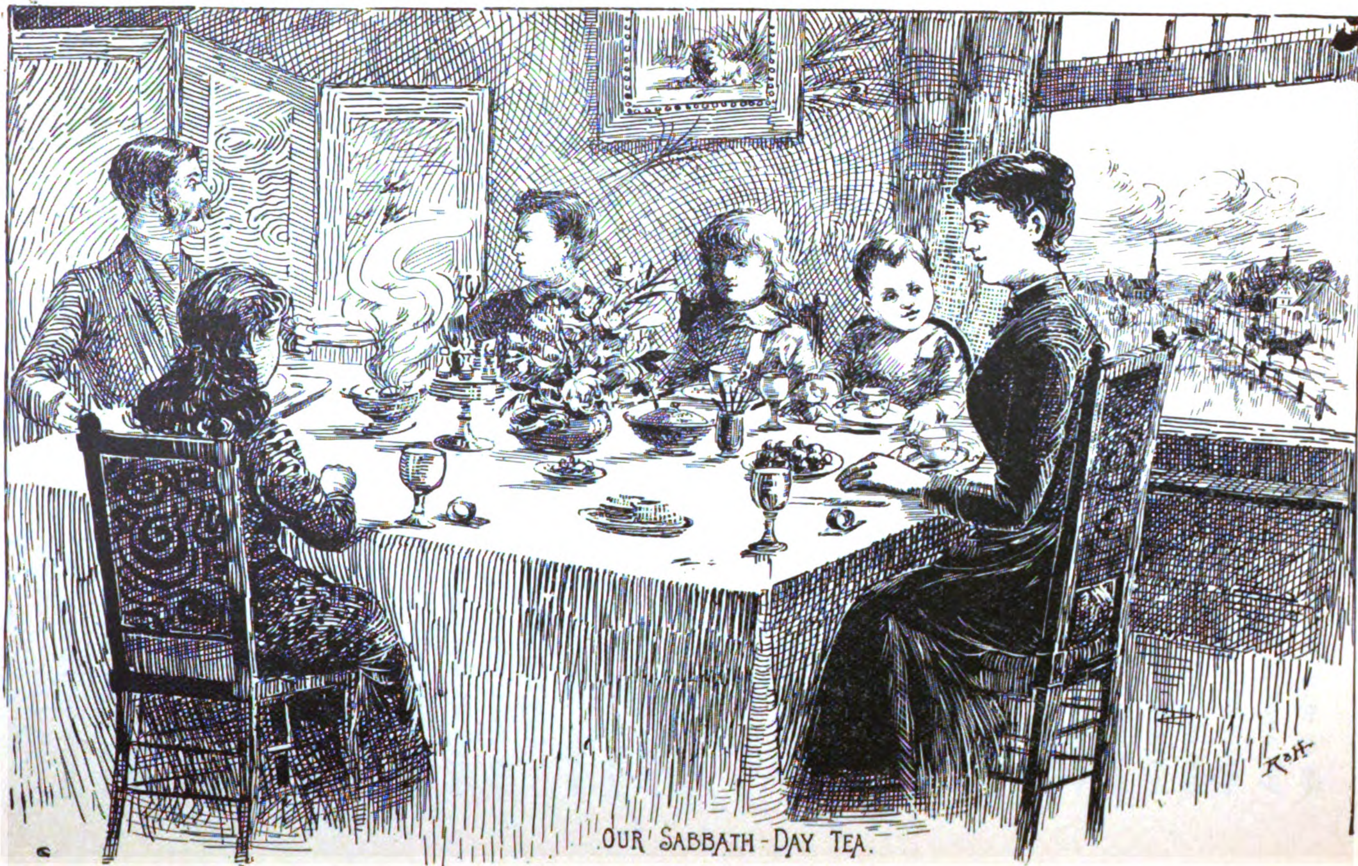

OUR SABBATH-DAY TEA.

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be deprived, against their wills, of the calm and rest which Sabbath intends. You, who demand a Sabbath for recreation, for amusement for hard workers, say open the Zoölogical Gardens and museums. If these, why not the shows, theatres and beer-gardens? If these can be allowed to make money, why cannot the stores, the markets, the factories be open? If these are *all* open, then that working-class, which in your demand were represented as exhausted by six days' work, and needing recreation, will be required to work seven days (or lose their bread), and they will see neither rest nor recreation. Again, parents who cherish the Sabbath as a day of holy resting desire to bring their children up so to regard it; but if the barriers which surround the Sabbath are cast down, and the day is made exactly like other days, there will be no quiet at home in which to instruct the children. As they pass along the streets to church they see examples which their parents believe to be pernicious; their very church service is invaded with din; the individual right of the parent to train up his child in accordance with his own conscience is interfered with. You abhor swearing: suppose it were legal for a man to stand by the hour at your gate, and fill the ears of your boys with profanity?"

"I don't go so far as you think I do about the Sabbath," said Mr. Carr. "I don't hold that any one should be allowed to disturb his neighbor. Parson can't make me go to church, and I ought not to claim a right to disturb parson's Sunday. As to the Sunday shows and excursions, I don't want you to think I'd go or take my children."

"Why not? You don't think them wrong, surely?"

"No, not in themselves, but in the way they are conducted. If you notice in the papers, they generally end in a row: there is always a lot of noise, drinking and swearing; and, as the result of the confusion, often an accident. I always look for a blow-up of some sort when I hear of a big Sunday excursion."

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"Do you have that feeling about large school, church or trades' excursions on other days of the week?"

"Oh, no. I sometimes go to them with my boys."

"Consider, then, Mr. Carr, that you instinctively admit that the people who clamor for and indulge in the breaking of the Fourth Commandment are the noisy, dangerous, law-breaking class; while the observers of the command are the law-abiding, orderly, respectable people: does not that speak pretty well for the command, and for the virtue of keeping it intact?"

"Now see here, Miss Sophronia," said Mr. Carr, with a fine appearance of liberality, "I'll take that command in as a part of *morals:* there's as much morals as religion in it, and I hold to morals."

I made no remark about the connection of morals and religion, but passed on to the next command:

"What do you think of the Fifth: 'Honor thy father and thy mother—?'"

"That's morals, sound morals, and the voice of Nature."

"But without the enlightening influence of the Bible, it seems to me that this voice of Nature often dies away, not only in solitary individuals, but in whole nations, and those most widely removed in race and situation. In India, Alaska, and the distant islands, I find that parents make a practice of murdering their children, and children in turn make a practice of murdering their sick or aged parents, casting them out to the sea, to starvation, or to wild animals. I never yet heard of a Christian man, or even of one nominally a professor and respecter of religion, who knocked down his mother, or refused to support his aged parents, or to care for his sick father; while despisers of religion are often arraigned for these crimes. If you dissever religion from this law, you will soon find it disregarded. Also you will note that nations ignorant of the Bible lack that general respect for the parental tie, this enforcing of the mutual rights

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of parents and children, known to Christian laws. Take the next command: 'Thou shalt not kill.' Consider statistics: are murders more or less common in Christian lands than in others?"

"Oh, there are not an hundreth part so many in the so-called Christian lands," said Mr. Carr.

"The *so-called Christian lands*," I said, "are lands where the divinity of Christ is generally recognized, where God is acknowledged, where his Book of Laws is known, and where there are enough religious people to give a *tone* to public opinion. In these lands you say there are not one per cent. of the murders in other lands; it seems to me then that in that admission there is a small showing of *morals* where there is no religion. I might question if, where Biblical religion is unknown, morals in any true sense are not also unknown. If that is so, in holding as you say to morals, and not to religion, you hold to one thing, rejecting another with which it is inseparably connected: you admit the tree and deny its root. Take the statistics of nominally Christian countries: what proportion is there between the decrease of murders and the general diffusion of the Bible?"

"It is a fact too well known to question," said Mr. Carr, "that as Bible religion increases among a people, murder decreases."

I was not ready to take advantage of this admission, so I said: "Well, now, what do you think of polygamy and of divorce?"

"I abhor them from my soul," said Mr. Carr, "as the ruin of the family tie, and of family life; and therefore a root of destruction to the state. States, Miss Sophronia, begin in families: where the family is weak or impure, the state will be weak and impure. There are no two more ruinous, outrageous and dangerous doctrines at the present day than those of Polygamy and Free Love."

"Oh, indeed," said I; "and did you ever hear these upheld by any upholder of the religion of Jesus Christ? Have not the

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Mormon Polygamists got a Bible of their own? and are not the advocates of Free Love howling their loudest against the Christian religion and the word of God? If you hold the Family Life dear as your own soul, who inaugurated that life but the God whom you ignore? If you consider the sanctity of the family indispensable to your own happiness and to the stability of the state, where is its bulwark but in the word of God? where is its defence but in laws which take their rise from that word? Lands where there are no Bibles are lands of polygamy and divorce, and of no marriage relations. You will find Turkey, and India, and Siam, and other heathen lands, full of Harems; you may look to lands of Bibles for virtuous mothers and wife-loving husbands. Take again the relation between a general knowledge of the Bible and the personal virtue of the citizens: you must admit from known figures that they are in direct proportion. Just in proportion as a land is a land of religion, it is a land of Homes. The Home is founded by God, built up by his worship, garrisoned by Biblical religion. Show me a Free Lovist, or a Polygamist, who takes the Bible for his guide, and Jesus Christ for his Lord."

"Really, I don't suppose that there is such a one."

"Then, do you not see, that in rejecting God and his religion, you reject the foundation and assurance of Home?"

"But, Miss Sophronia, I do not reject or ignore God. I regard him as the fountain of morals. I suppose that there is a God who made everything, who maintains everything, and has a general rule over everything. I cannot see any other reasonable explanation of things."

"Then, in your view, there is a Being, who holds the general relations of a King, a Ruler, a Father. Where is there a king who has no laws for his kingdom, expects no service, loyalty or recognition from his subjects, and has no order, no appoint-

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ments, no state in his household? Only a truly great and reasonable Being could create, maintain and rule as you admit. But such a Being must necessarily have formulated some laws for his kingdom; must make some demands in behalf of his own honor; he could not foster ignorance, ingratitude and anarchy in his subjects. The Bible instructs us how we may serve this Being in a method agreeable to his will. Such a Being must have been as reasonable as earthly sovereigns, and have perpetuated some code of laws and directions for his dominions. Among all the books which claim to be Divine and the formulation of such directions, only the Bible, as judged by its effects among men in promoting their happiness, virtue and well-being, is worthy of our credence, *that approves its origin by being able to secure its end.* Biblical religion is the serving and esteeming God in a manner agreeable to his expressed will. Now if you accept the God and reject religion, you admit yourself a rebel and virtually an anarchist, at once. How would such a proceeding work in our civil relations?"

"Why, Miss Sophronia," said Mr. Carr, "you are drawing the lines pretty tight."

"Mr. Carr, did you not say that the state begins in the Family, and that as the Family is the state will be?"

"Yes, I did, Miss Sophronia; and that I stand to."

"And did you not also admit, from knowledge of statistics, that those states are stronger, purer, more thriving and honored, better every way, where there is Christianity and the Bible?"

"Well, yes; that's a fact, too."

"Then, where is the point where the family, not needing in itself religion or the Bible, must begin to receive them for the good of the state? If the state is built up by the diffusion of religious light, is it not that that light is held in the families of the citizens? You cannot imagine a state where the families

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rejected religion, avowing, as a state, a religion and maintaining itself on Biblical authority. This advantage of Biblical Religion in the state is a thing of the Homes. In these homes public opinion is manufactured, and legislators are nourished, and an executive is trained up. If you reject religion for your Home, you must, as far as you are able to do so, reject it for your state, and if you think the state needs it and thrives by it, then you should, out of loyalty, if from no other reason, cultivate it in your Home. You said the state is ruined in the ruin of the Family. If Religion is good for the state, it is good for the Family. Did it ever occur to you, that just as an increase of Biblical religiousness in the state decreases vice, murders, thefts, so an increase of religious opinion in the Family will decrease the chance of any of its members being murderers, or thieves, or rioters? All the criminals were somebody's sons and came out of Families, and if the parents had maintained Family Piety, by your own statistical statement, they would have reduced by ninety-nine per cent. the likelihood of their children being criminals. You ought to cultivate Family Religion for the mere sake of making it highly improbable that any of your promising children should ever be criminals; for, as you have yourself admitted, morals and religion seem to be inseparable."

"Upon my word, it does look that way," said Mr. Carr, with an anxious glance to his boys who were rolling on the grass.

"I heard that when you lived in the next county, you had served as a juror more than any man in the county."

"So I had. It became a real burden to me. I tell you, Miss Sophronia, it is hard to sit as a juror when a man is up for murder, or likely to get twenty years in the penitentiary."

"Well, Mr. Carr, in those trials, for all kinds of crimes, which you attended, were the accused persons men who were esteemed religious, professed Bible piety, or advocated the Bible as a rule of living?"

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"Upon my word, ma'am, I can't remember *one* that was. Now that never occurred to me before."

"This, then, is another reason for maintaining religion in your family; out of religious families the criminal dock is not filled. Were you not for five years overseer of the poor?"

"Yes, I was. I'm glad I'm out of that business."

"Will you tell me whether you found, among your paupers generally, members of Christian churches, readers of the Bible, regular attendants on divine worship—what are called religious people?"

"Bless my life, no! They were usually a hard set. They were many of them drunkards, or had always been incorrigibly lazy and dirty; or had trained up roughly a lot of rowdy, ill-behaved children, who would not or could not help the old folks. I only remember one really Christian pauper. She was a good old woman, but she was not long in the almshouse: the parson's wife got after her, and took her away for the church to keep."

"Another argument for cultivating religion in your family. Christian households do not furnish the paupers; if they are not rich, they are not beggars. David says: 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread.' Remember that, my neighbor, in behalf of your children and grandchildren. But you mentioned the unfilial conduct of these paupers' children. When you admit God as a universal Father, and so your Father, and yet give him no filial reverence, are you not setting your children a poor example of father-loving and honoring? God says: 'If I be a Father where is mine honor, and if I be a Master where is my fear?' Now only one question more. You know this county well. Setting aside a few rich and notorious men, who have gained wealth by speculations and extortions, and wild, unjustifiable means, are not the well-to-do men, the tidy fortunes, the comfortable little properties, made by diligence,

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honesty and economy, in the hands of the religious people? Those who are living from hand to mouth, who are in rags and debt, and on the verge of pauperism in every slack time, are the men who ignore religion, reject the Bible, despise the Sabbath. The steady church-goers, the decent, religious men, are the self-sustaining, honest, free-from-debt men: is it not so?"

"Well, yes, Miss Sophronia, I'll admit that, for it is so."

"Then this is another reason for your maintaining, in your family, religion and Bible rules; for these are in the way of thrift, of competence, of honesty, of independence, of really and righteously getting on in the world: is this not so? Don't you owe your children Family Piety? Does not their future honor and success demand it of you? As an example to your children, should you not maintain religion at Home? As a citizen, do you not owe such an upholding of religion to the good of the state?"

Mr. Carr rose. "Perhaps, Miss Sophronia, if I had not kept pretty clear of the parsons, and of the Bible, I might have had some of these things set out in this light before. I shall study this matter up, I can tell you, and see where it comes out." So saying he called his boys, and said "good-evening."

What is more important in a Family than Religion? The security, the perpetuity of the Home, demands it. If the Home is not to be invaded by crimes, by the anguish of children departing into ways of vice—if it is not to breed dishonesty, unthrift and pauperism—it should be garrisoned by Family Faith, by Piety. If I were not a religious person, but merely a careful, common sense observer of affairs and a student of statistics, I should hold this opinion.

When my nieces Miriam and Helen had been married ten years I desired to mark the time by a Family Gathering. I invited the relations for a dinner, but the dinner was to be at three o'clock, and I requested my three nieces, Cousin Ann's

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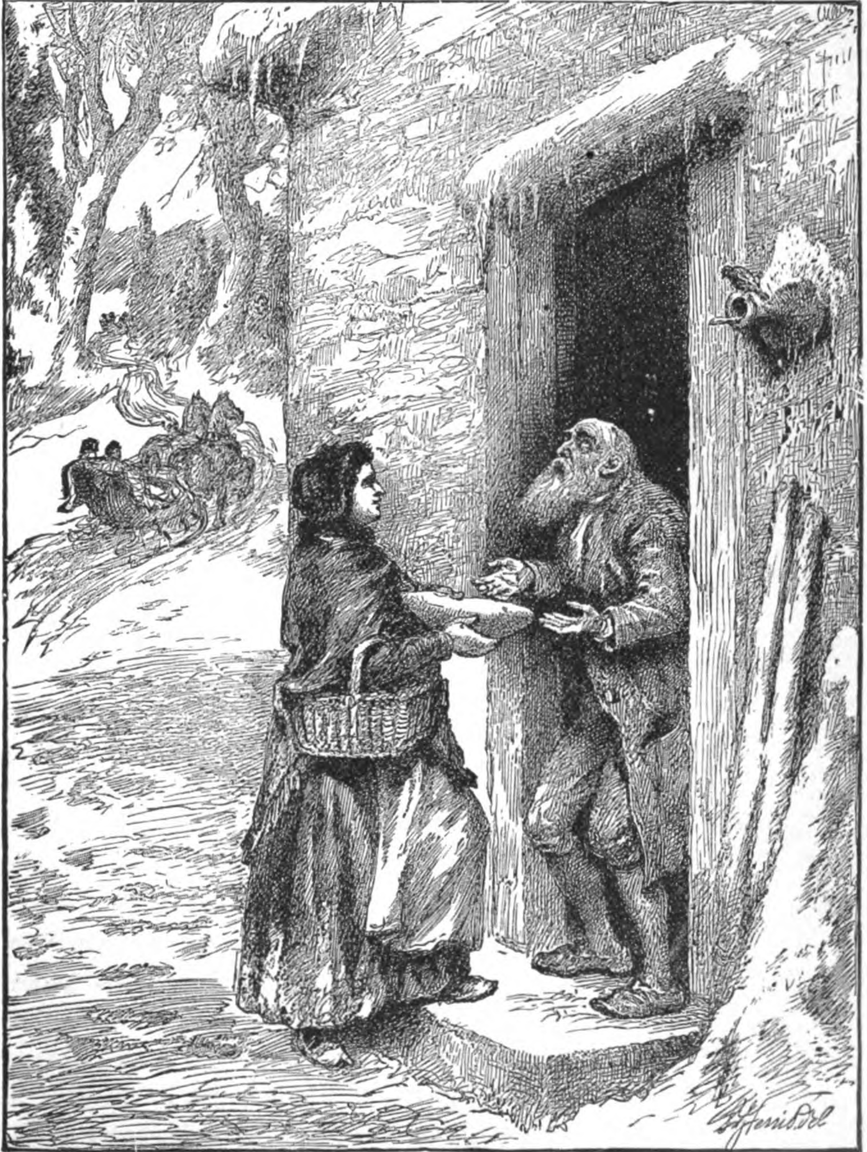

"THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY."

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Sara, who had married young Winton, Mary Watkins, and two or three more, to come about half-past ten, so as to spend the day with me.

"Do you remember," said Hester, when we were all quietly seated together, "the conversation which you had with Miriam and Helen, before they were married, about the Building of a Home? You thought I was not particularly interested, but I treasured it all, and I do not know of any instruction which has done me more good. Have you not something further to say on the same subject?"

"My dear girls," I replied, "to-day I feel inclined to converse with you on a theme even more important, namely, the Building of a Home for Eternity; the projecting of the home which you rear on earth into the future world; the raising of those homes which you are framing here below into homes not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It cannot be that a structure so sacred, so divine in its origin, so glorious in its possibilities, as a Home, finds 'its be-all and its end-all here.' I told you long ago that the foundation of a Home, its corner-stone, must be laid in sound religious principle; how can we better employ part of this day of reunion than in discussing how to carry out this religious principle in the every-day life of the Home? The Home is the cradle and nursery where human immortals begin a life which shall last forever; therefore, in the Home, preparations should be made for that immortal life. I wish you would suggest to me some reasons for especially cultivating Religion in the Family."

"If it is true," said Mary Watkins, "as we all believe it to be, that Religion is the highest concern of man, then we should cultivate it in our families, as the best thing in which we can interest our children; also because our homes are worthy of the noblest that can be brought into them, and because early impressions and home impressions are usually more strong and

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lasting than any others; while, as we owe our children the very best that we can do for them, we should not, while trying to prepare them for this earthly life, which may end at any moment, fail to prepare them for the life which shall never end."

"If religion, or true piety, is the pervading spirit of the Home," remarked Miriam, "then we are relieved of a gnawing anxiety for the eternal future of our loved ones; I can imagine nothing more painful than for a wife to feel that the husband whom she loves may at any moment be hurried unprepared into eternity, or for a mother to see her children growing up ungodly: to feel that after she has left this world they may be living wicked lives, and dying impenitent. Family piety is strong and calm in a confident expectation of the reunion of dear ones in the eternal world; thus it takes away the keenest sting of death, and gives us courage in the hour of separation."

"We cannot for an instant think," said Hester, "that the soul going out of this world is lessened in any of its powers; that which is highest in it, its love, must be rather intensified. How grand, then, to think of family ties strengthened and perpetuated in a world of glory! Family piety, purifying and elevating the family relation here, gives the earnest of an eternal reunion of the family in a world where nothing can offend. Husbands and wives are unwilling to be parted long in this world; mothers are loath to have their children leave them; how great an incentive have we to the cultivation of family piety, giving us assurance of a family forever united, and forever happy!"

"Piety is the finest inheritance which parents can bestow upon their children," said Sara. "True, grace is the gift of God, yet he has promised to bestow it upon the children of his children, to many generations; he takes the whole family of his followers into covenant; we do not find in the gospels one instance where Christ refused the plea of a parent for a child. We may strive to lay up fortunes for our children, and may

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fail in doing so, or left, they may be a temptation and a curse; we may strive to educate them well, and they may not have ability to receive a thorough education, or means may be lacking, or, acquired, it may be misused; but if we strive for the salvation of our children, if we consecrate them to God, and train them up in accordance with that consecration, we are sure of reward."

"Sara," I said, "your parents, with a large family, a large farm, and often insufficient help, could plead little time for religious duties, if any one could ever make such a plea. Now will you tell us something of their method of religious training, for to them, as to the Elect Lady, it could be written: 'I rejoiced when I found of thy children walking in the truth.'"

"Well," said Sara, "we never sat down to the table without a blessing being asked; always as soon as the breakfast was ended, chairs were drawn back from the table, and father took the Bible for prayers; no hurry of work interfered with family worship; all being together, servants and children, when breakfast was ended, no one need be waited for, or be absent. Father never made very long prayers, but he saw to it that we were attentive; he was apt to ask some question while he was reading, which we must be alert to answer; this kept us from dreaming during prayer-time. As soon as tea was over we had evening prayers, a little shorter perhaps than in the morning; so, you see, even as babies in arms, we were present at worship, and never knew what it was to be without it. We were always taken to church, even as very little children; the habit formed of quiet at prayers helped us to be quiet there; from being in church and keeping quiet, we soon learned to hear and understand something that was said or done; at home father asked us for the text, questioned us of what we could remember, and himself explained and repeated something that had been said. He never allowed any sharp or unkind criticisms of the preacher; even when not

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especially pleased himself, he would not permit any carping. He used to say: 'Don't quarrel with the dish in which you get the bread of life,' and he frequently quoted the passage: 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.' I know once our hired man said: 'That was a mighty poor sermon to-day,' and father retorted: 'Poor or not, Thomas, if you'll live *up* to it this week, you'll make an astonishing improvement on your past.'

"We were required to be orderly on the Sabbath, and to read only Sabbath books; but we were well supplied with these, and could read them on the porch, or in a tree, in the barn or garden, as we liked, if we would not get into a frolic or foolish talk. We had always to learn some verses from the Bible on Sunday, and read a chapter, and repeat its substance, and after tea, mother always instructed us from the Bible for an hour, and then we read a few chapters, verse about, while father explained them to us. We were encouraged to amuse ourselves asking each other hard questions, capping verses, making or deciphering scriptural enigmas, all of which increased our acquaintance with the Bible. When we did anything wrong, Bible authority was appealed to, to condemn it; if we proposed any course which our parents did not approve, they based their disapproval on the Scriptures: they squared their own conduct on the Bible, and we saw clearly that they only wished us to walk in the way where they went themselves, and that in pressing piety upon us, they offered thus that which themselves thought most worth the having. They considered us as children of God, because themselves were God's children, and they required us to walk worthy of that calling before we had in our own right made any public profession thereof. Our mother, no matter how tired or hurried she might be, always took us to bed, until we were eight years old, heard us say our prayers reverently, and repeated to us a verse of Scripture. When we were old enough to go to bed by

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ourselves, as we kissed mother good-night, she almost always said: 'Do not neglect your prayers, and *think* while you pray.' We were always carefully kept from irreligious companions, and from books which were in any way hostile to piety, and we were taught to reverence good people because they were loved of God. In fact, our Home Life was a Religious Life: piety was as natural to our home as its food or its labors; we grew into it, because we were trained in it, just as the trees in the orchard grow into good fruit-bearing, because they had been planted, grafted, pruned, cultivated, cared for, all with a view to good fruit-bearing. I never heard any one question the quality of the fruit, because it was a product of this cultivating, and had not developed itself without any help or attention."

"Indeed, Sara," said Helen, "I am much obliged to you for such a plain, simple statement of your mother's religious training of her family; it makes things seem clearer and easier to me."

"We may also," said Hester, "learn or take warning by the converse. I visited once in a family where the parents were church-members, but living among worldly people, and more and more in a worldly way, they retained very few or no practices of piety. They never had a blessing at table, never family prayer; they went to church or not, just as it happened. The mother sent the nurse to take the children to bed, so that they hardly heard of saying their prayers. If their mother on Sunday bestirred herself to tell them a Bible story, or that God made them, or that Adam was the first man, it was as much religious instruction as ever they got. If the parents went to church, the children were left at home, for their mother said it was too much trouble to get them ready, and their father said they distracted him by being uneasy: besides their parents considered going to Sunday-school—which they did irregularly—was quite religion enough for a Sunday; therefore, if the parents were in the family pew, between them, where their children should have been, stretched a vacuum, which God abhors."

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"I'm afraid," said Helen, "that some of my training has been like that, though I trust not quite so deplorable. However, I resolve to do better; indeed, I have often so resolved, but when I get the children about me on Sunday to give them a little instruction, they are so restless, and make such insane answers, that as often as anything I end by getting provoked. Imagine Phil, after I have taught him this two years that God made him, when I asked the question, replying, gravely, 'I guess the President;' or insisting upon stopping all instruction while he, during the story of The Fall, investigated *why* Adam and Eve, shut out at the gate, 'did not climb over the fence,' or *why* Adam called a beast such a name as a Kangaroo: I said, in despair, that *he did not* call it a Kangaroo; then says Phil, "That ain't its name, and I shall always call it a *hopper;*' and then off go Tom and Phil on a dispute whether the term *hopper* is not pre-empted by a *grasshopper*, and thus ends *my* talk. Hester, you ought to have them; you know how to deal with children, and really I don't."

We none of us could help laughing at poor Helen's discomfiture, and really, as to her children, I think with Hannah that they are the "most masterful mischiefs that ever were born." I told Hester one day that "the children seemed to have all the decision which their mother lacked." She said that was because their mother had never shown any decision in her government, and so had encouraged insubordination.

"However," said Helen, "I did not intend, by the narration of my difficulties, to interrupt our conversation on Religion in the Family, for it is a question which I am sure I need to hear discussed. Aunt Sophronia, you have said little as yet on the subject: give us some plain instruction."

"It seems to me," I said, "that Sara's account of Cousin Ann's method of cultivating Family Piety covers nearly the whole ground, and gives us the picture of a godly home: a home

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which, broken at last here, shall not perish, but shall be transplanted to the skies, to grow in greater and greater beauty, as a central sun of a system around which revolve the stars of other homes, lit by its light while here below. The fact is, my children, that where there is any vital piety in one or both the heads of a Family, it must make itself felt and prominent in the Home: the *light in the heart shines out first at the hearth.* If there is no Family Religion, there is *no religion* at all in the Family; the true Christian is never like Bunyan's Mr. Talkative, 'a saint abroad and a devil at home;' nor is he pious at church and for himself, and indifferent to the spiritual concerns of his family; and not only he must be not indifferent, but actively interested in their salvation, if he has any true piety, for if religion is anything to a soul, it is the first and best of everything. God setteth the solitary in families that he may preserve to himself a righteous seed upon the earth; and if we do not serve God in our homes, we contravene the Lord's highest purpose in Home-making, while his tenderest benediction falls on him of whom he can say, as of his servant of old, I know him that he will command his children and his household after him. We ought to esteem it God's choice gift to us that our families may be numbered in his chosen generation and royal priesthood.

> "'So boasting not that they derive their birth
> From loins enthroned and nobles of the earth,
> But higher yet their proud pretensions rise,
> Children of parents passed into the skies.'

"I would like especially to urge upon you careful and regular attendance on the services of your church, both on Sabbath and also at the weekly meetings. Take your children with you to the weekly meetings, whatever they are. We form our habits in youth, so do not let them grow up with a habit of absenting themselves from the gatherings of God's people. We can find time for these things, if we will only *endeavor* to do so. You

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know, Sara, that the Wintons were once for three years in Europe. I heard of their course there from others who were abroad at the same time. They carefully arranged their travelling so that on Sabbaths they should be where there was evangelical preaching in English, and there they went twice to church; they always managed to find the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting, and attend it as regularly as at home; they spent their Sabbaths just as they did in this country, not 'sight-seeing,' and then salving over conscience by saying it was 'visiting churches and cathedrals;' they went to no places of amusement which they would have judged it inconsistent to attend when at home. A lady once said to Mrs. Winton: 'Why are you so scrupulous here? We always think we have a right to a little relaxing of the lines when we are abroad.'

"Mrs. Winton was standing by her dressing-table, and she, without seeming to notice the remark, held out a case containing a valuable diamond ring and pin, saying: 'I might have left those at home, I think?'

"'By no means,' cried her visitor; 'they are just as becoming to you here as there; they are too valuable to be left behind; wear them, to let people know what you are.'

"'Jewels do not make people,' she replied; 'I showed you these as a parable. My religion becomes me as well abroad as at home; it was too valuable to be left behind. I will wear it as best I can, to show what I profess to be.'

"After hearing this story, I did not wonder that foreign travel had not injured the consistency, the simple common-sense, of that family."

'You remind me," said Hester, "that some people going abroad strive to ape foreigners, to seem other than they are, and to lose, as far as possible, their nationality. This always vexes my patriotism. I think this should suggest to us, that God says that the citizenship of his people is in heaven, and

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Plato teaching the Greek youths.
"Follow after Justice and Virtue, considering that the soul is immortal"—Plato.—*Page* 261.

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that we should, as far as we can below, cultivate the manners of our true city. Let us rejoice in our birthright, and teach our children to glory in it."

"I remember," said Mary Watkins, "that our minister in a sermon on Family Piety said, that we should, in setting up a new home, begin by whole-heartedly consecrating it to God; and as children are born into that home, each of them should also be consecrated to him, so that our desire for, and earnest expectation of, our child's salvation should be coexistent with its life, and our training and example should carefully correspond to that desire and hope."

"Yes," said Miriam, "we must be consistent in that training: not try and rush toward heaven on Sunday, and then run toward the world all the other days in the week; half-way doings do not succeed in business nor in housekeeping, and they will not succeed in soul-training."

"This," I said, "is the ideal of a safe and happy home: that it is founded in godliness, vocal with thanksgiving; guarded by an entreated Prayer-Hearer; and having children given from their birth to God, the parents and children are found cheerily serving the Lord day by day. Whatever is good for the religious growth of the parents—Scripture study, Sabbath-keeping, benevolence—will be good for the children, and they should be trained to it; they have a right to have ensured to them the blessings which God gives his servants, in this life and in the life to come."

"It seems," said Hester, "that Mr. Carr has bought a big Bible, and every morning reads a chapter to his family; he has hired a seat in church and attends regularly with all his household, and has put his boys in the Sunday-school. Some one told him that they were glad he had become a Christian. He replied that he made no pretensions to that, but that he had concluded that a family of children had a right to Religion in

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the Home, inasmuch as it was a safeguard against crime and pauperism, and an encouragement to thrift and respectability; so he meant to go as far as he could toward securing it for his boys, just as he tried to make them a tidy patrimony, and procure for them a good education."

"He has been stealing some of Aunt Sophronia's thunder," said Miriam, smiling.

"I trust," I said, "that the truth he reads and hears will be blessed to him until he really becomes a Christian; it speaks well for him that he is doing the best that he knows how to do. This religion which Mr. Carr thinks will be advantageous for his home, must be possessed by himself if he would impress it upon his children. Remember, my dear girls, if you desire to cultivate piety in your children, you must have yourself something better than a formal, cold, cautious, time-serving sort of piety. There are no keener critics than the innocent, observant eyes and thoughtful hearts of little children; dare, yes, desire, to be warm and enthusiastic in your Christianity if you would commend it to your families as a thing worth striving for. Religion should be shown forth as joyous, free, hearty, hopeful, if it would enchain the ardent affections of childhood and youth; from the Christian home let—

"'The light of love shine over all.'

Rich or poor in its appointments, it should be cheery and kindly, full of common interests and homely self-sacrifices, and mutual confidences, and good order. Nowhere else should things be more honestly what they seem. It is only by *home sentiments* that home can be made a place whereto the hearts of children can be firmly bound; by a happy and affectionate home, children are held from wandering. There is little hope of religious lives for children who are allowed to find their pleasures away from their parents' guardianship, haunting

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strangers' homes, or unknown places of amusement, staying out in the evenings and coming in late, unchallenged. If children are to grow up godly, they must have the shelter which God provided for them—their home. Being out late at night lies at the beginning of nine-tenths of the courses of ruin which are on record. Parents should insist on their children being home-keepers, and then should make happy the home that keeps them. How often do we hear quoted: 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty?' Eternal vigilance is the price of family piety. The parent should honorably face the fact, that his position demands incessant, kindly guardianship of his child; the child's companions should be well known to the parent; the home-training of these, their morals, manners, mental characteristics, should be well understood, and their influence over the child carefully noted. If it is true that a man is known by the company which he keeps, and that evil communications corrupt good manners, can a parent be too watchful over the companionships of his children? So, also, the parents' vigilance must be extended over the important matter of the child's reading. A child should not be left, in its early simplicity and heedlessness, to choose its own books; not merely the kind of books should be regarded, but their especial effects on their young reader, for what is only a needed stimulus to one mind might be dangerously exciting to another, and what might merely properly develop the sympathies of one child might make another morbid. Consider: do you want your child to be like this book? Is its tone that which you desire in your child's mind?"

"Oh, me," said Helen, "what a world of work it is to rear a family! What a burden of responsibility!"

"Consider, my Helen," I replied, "that nothing is a world of work which is systematically and earnestly carried on, which is begun at the beginning and regularly proceeded with; and if

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it *were* a world of work, a world of work is *nothing* when we are training for eternity, when we have souls in keeping."

"And yet," said Mary Watkins, "how very different this training thus far sketched is from the usual training of children! If this is the true way to *bring children up*, then most children must be merely allowed *to come up*."

And yet is not this the model of the Family life, as God designs it? The Bible is the guide-book, the family code of laws, and Christ is the desired Model for all, and he stands illuminating parents and children, and children's children:

"As the reflection of a light
Between two burnished mirrors gleams,
Or lamps upon a bridge at night,
Stretch on and on before the sight,
Till the long vista endless seems."

"There is another thing which we must not forget," remarked Hester: "God sets servants and dependents in the religious keeping of the Heads of Families. No home can shut up itself in secret isolation; its circle forever widens; the servants, the neighbors, the guests, all feel its extending influence. Religion in the Family sheds its beneficent light on all the homes near—as Shakespeare says:

"'How far yon little candle sheds its ray?
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.'"

"There is one thing more which I wish to suggest," said Sara. "Children who feel that they are governed in accordance with God's laws, that their parents are in their training responsible to a higher Power, and looking toward the highest good, yield the readiest obedience. Children so brought up are more thoughtful, have more careful consciences, look more narrowly toward the consequences of their acts. This reverence for law, as a thing divine, secures them from many of the crimes of youth."

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Martha came now to tell us our other guests were arriving. As we rose, Hester quoted from her beloved Plato:

"'And thus the tale has been told, and may-be for our salvation, if we are obedient to the word spoken. Wherefore, my counsel is, that we hold fast the heavenly way, and follow after justice and virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal and able to endure every sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live, dear to one another and to Heaven, both while remaining here, and when like conquerors in the games we receive our reward.'"

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CHAPTER XI.

HOSPITALITY IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA TELLS HOW TO ENTERTAIN FRIENDS AND STRANGERS.

I WAS working in my garden one day among my roses, and I was thinking of the very many varieties of this queen of flowers. I did not particularly notice by what chain of association and subtilely linked thoughts my mind passed on to the infinite varieties that there are in the exercise of hospitality, that queen of social virtues. Nearly all these varieties I have seen exercised, even in this one town and its surroundings. There is *ostentatious hospitality*, for instance. One of our ladies here says, that she would not entertain company at all, unless she could do it handsomely: having a handsome guest-chamber, elegant table-furniture, plenty of servants and stylish meals. Now, of course, *she* entertains for the sake of herself, of gratifying her own vanity; not for the good of her guest. I told her so one day. She said: "Of course her guest had the benefit of all the nice things." That is true. But still if she had not these splendors, she would refuse a hospitality which her guest might need. There again is *spasmodic hospitality:* that is Mrs. Black's variety. She will branch out once or twice a year into a fine, showy party, which the family have been tired out preparing for, or for sake of which the family table has been scrimped for weeks previously. To this gay entertainment Mrs. Black invites all her friends. For it she exhausts all her energies; and during all the rest of the year

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she never thinks of having a relative visit her, asking a friend who drops in to stay to tea, inviting two or three acquaintances for an afternoon, or a friend for the day. But, really, she and her guests get very little gratification out of this spasmodic hospitality: it is strained and burdensome. Again there is *nervous hospitality.* I don't know a more striking instance of that than Mrs. Smalley, Mary Watkins' mother. When Mrs. Smalley is expecting guests, she is in a state of worry and flutter for fear her house will not look well enough, or will be less attractive than they expected, or less fine than they are accustomed to. She does not simply arrange the best she has in the best way which she knows, and then rest contented: there is no content about it. She frets herself into a state of excitement over rooms, bedding, table-furniture and food, and as soon as her guests arrive this accumulated mass of anxieties falls on them like an avalanche. She escorts them to her spare-room to lay off their wraps. She discourses:

"I don't know as you'll be able to turn around here, this is such a little bit of a place. I tell Smalley it isn't fit to invite any one into. Smalley is so queer. *He* says: 'Why, if it does for us it will do for our friends.' But, la, *I* want to give people better than I have myself. *I've* always had to put up with poor things, but I don't reckon *you* have. You don't care to wash your hands? I wish I had nicer towels to offer you. I've always been laying out to get some of those long, wide, bordered damask-towels, but I never have. I hope you'll excuse these. Shall we go down-stairs? These are such narrow, dark, crooked stairs I'm afraid you'll break your neck on them. I tell Smalley we ought never to ask anybody to go up them; but, la, Smalley, he says, 'they're all that we've got.' Now, my sister's front stairs are fit to go on. She has two pair. But her things are always better than mine. I'm afraid you'll find this sitting-room close: it's so low-ceiled; and it's too cold

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for you, of course. I cannot get this fire to act as it ought, though I've worked at it all day. *Do* try this rocking-chair, though it is a poor thing to offer you, enough to break one's back; but that sofa is so stiff, and hard, and slippery, not near so nice as you're used to. I'm sorry I can't make you more comfortable, it worries me nearly to death."

And so she goes on: she is sure her tea is poor, not first quality; she cannot tell what has got into her bread; the cake is not half as good as she wanted it to be; the preserves are not fit to offer you; the tongue is too salt; you will not make out a meal; she don't expect it when things are so poor; if you stay all night, do excuse the fact that she has comforts instead of blankets on the bed; and the sheets are too coarse to offer you, but she never can get things as she wants—and so on indefinitely: really in a worry herself, and getting her guests into a nervous state over her evident anxiety, while, in fact, all that she has is good, neat and abundant.

What a contrast to this is Cousin Ann's *common-sense hospitality?* Cousin Ann always, for her own comfort and the good of her family, has her house in the best order to which she can attain: there is neither dust, litter nor rags. As her means have gradually increased, so she has increased the furnishings and conveniences of her house: it is none of it too fine to use, and it is all thoroughly comfortable. She means to entertain her own family nicely, and takes other people in on the same footing. A thrifty housekeeper, her larder is never empty, she keeps jellies and preserves on hand, and her cake-box is replenished with something nice for a treat; her table-linen is always handsomely done-up, and she has always a bunch of flowers, or a moss-plate, or a growing fern as a centre-piece for her table Guests, invited or accidental, are always welcomed heartily, and without apology; they find everything in order; no one seems disturbed by their appearance. If Cousin Ann has not on her

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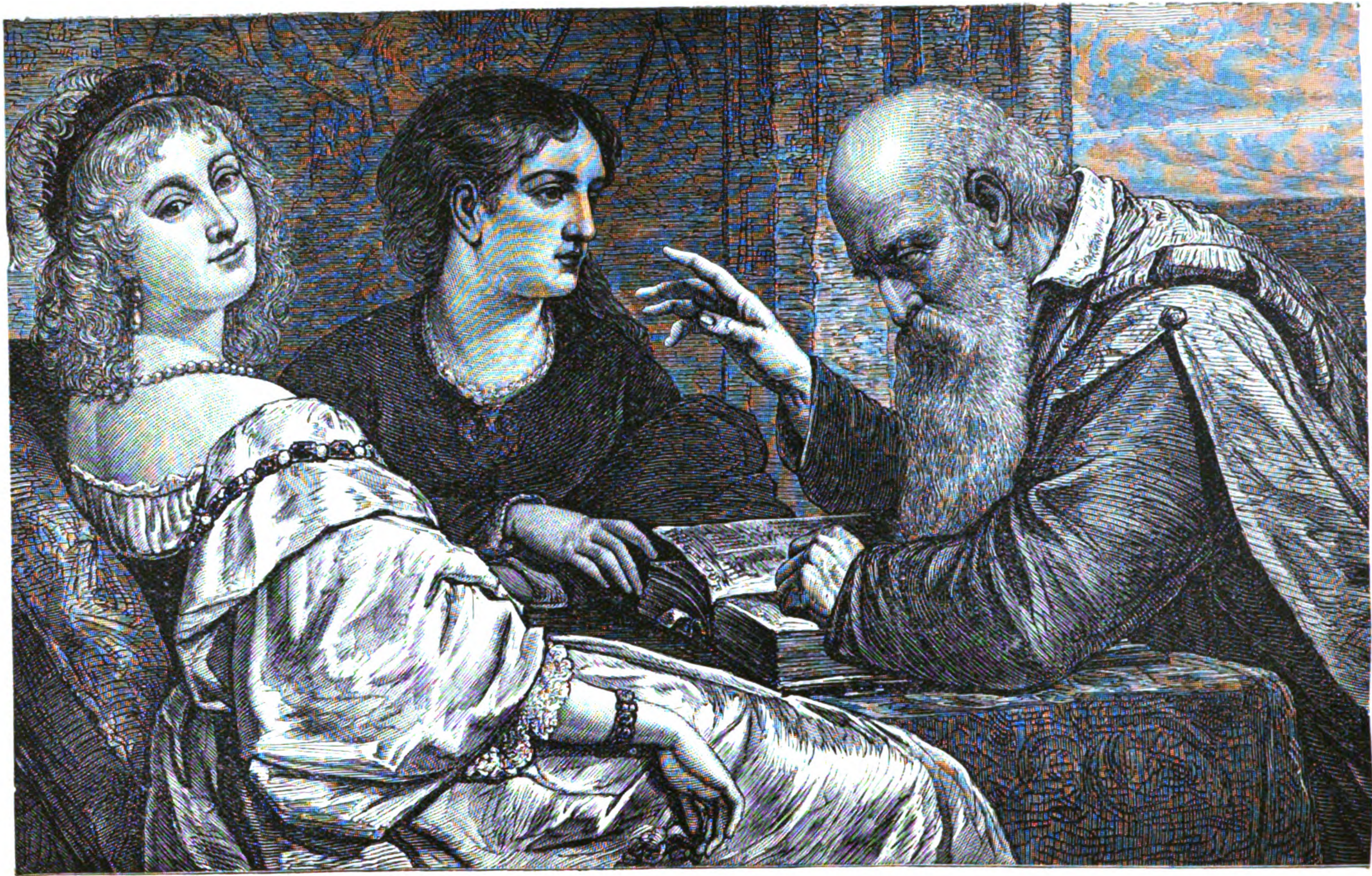

SOWING THE WORD.

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best gown, she is not rendered miserable and apologetic thereby, for her dress is always clean, and her cap and collar in order, and a white apron is always near at hand, and she meets friend or stranger with a plain, quiet dignity, becoming to herself and reassuring to them. If a surprise party rushes in on Cousin Ann, it does not demoralize her domestic arrangements, for if the fires are not lit in spare-room and parlor, they are all laid and ready to touch off with a match; people may come to stay for a day, an evening, or a week: they are made welcome; the work moves on in the same order as usual. Cousin Ann does not make "company" of them, sitting with them in evident anxiety to be looking after things elsewhere; but if there is something for her to do, she excuses herself calmly and attends to it. She will bring her basket of mending or her pan of apples to pare into the sitting-room, and chat merrily with her guests while her fingers are flying. She sets before her friends what happens to be on hand; perhaps, if there is time, adding a plate of biscuits, or a dish of broiled chicken; makes no excuses, is satisfied herself and takes it for granted that other people are.

Now, speaking of good kinds of hospitality, there is that kind exercised by our minister's wife. It is truly the *Biblical hospitality*, without grudging, shown first to fellow-Christians, then to the poor, and then to people in general. Just let a colporteur, an agent for a religious society, a poor minister travelling for his health, a missionary, come to her house, and the house is never too full or too poor to entertain him. I have seen her take in a little old Indian evangelist and treat him like a king. I told her once that with her young family and the constant claims made on her time and thoughts, I should suppose this hospitality would be a heavy tax; but she said that she just made the guests part of the family and shared with them what she had on hand, and so it did not seem burdensome. Hers is Christian or unselfish hospitality, and in direct contrast with

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that is the *selfish hospitality* of our member of Congress. I do believe that man never invites a guest for a meal, a day or a week, unless it is some one who will be *of use* to himself. Let any one come along, who will be of political service, and Mr. K. opens his house; nothing is too good; his servants, his horse and carriage, all he has are at his feet. His wife is never too busy or too feeble to have cake and coffee ready for a half dozen politicians, or an oyster-supper for members of the bar, or a county convention; but when did any poor, sick, or old relation or widow woman without means, or any little child, get hospitality from him? He offers what will come back to him in some way or another: he uses the hospitality which can be reduced finally to a cash return. When I was spending a winter with my half-sister, I saw a sample of what you may call *excessive hospitality*. She and her husband were both fond of company; they had a nice house and a nice income, but they taxed both to the utmost in their entertaining. The children shared the social instincts of the parents. The little ones had a fine play-room, a large back-yard, and plenty of toys; and they brought in their little mates by the half dozen to stay all day Saturday, or all of an afternoon, or to take a meal, or to stay all night. The older children had their friends by the day, week, or even month, especially if anything was going on in the city which their friends in town or country would enjoy seeing. They had their charade parties, their tableaux parties, their musical evenings. The parents gave a party now and then. They opened their house every other Friday evening for a reception, with simple refreshments; their dining-room was a sort of hotel for all their friends; whoever was passing at meal-time dropped in; if there was a convention, or literary or ecclesiastical gathering of any kind, they packed their house full of guests. My brother-in-law would ask business acquaintances, almost strangers even, to accept his hospitality for a week or so, while relations came for

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six months at a time. Even the servants shared the mania: if the cook's sister, or the chambermaid's cousin, or if the boy's mother were "out of place for a time, they came to stop for two or three days, and help do the work: they would not make a bit of trouble;" and so the kitchen almost always had a visitor. In fact, my poor sister was nearly worn to death with her hospitality; she never had a week's rest to herself, except when she shut the house, and fled. The excessive hospitality so destroyed the privacy of their home, and used up their income, that I hesitated to go to visit them, felt uncomfortable in staying, and never went again, though my sister said I had been a real rest to her, entertaining her company, superintending her children and sewing, and keeping her closets in order.

I often admire the hospitality exercised at Hester's: it may truly be called *elegant hospitality.* There is no show, no excess; everything is in order and in quiet, good taste; nothing seems to be a trouble. The guests are all persons of refinement: people of letters, artists, scholars whom it is a treat to meet; the conversation is improving; the talk of these learned and widely-travelled people seems to widen the sphere of one's own observation and experience: the very food on the table becomes a theme of intellectual conversation. The olives and sardines bring up anecdotes of Italy, or descriptions of famous paintings; a Dutch cheese, like fairy godmother's pumpkin, becomes a coach, and in it you ride off to Holland, and hear its thrilling history discussed according to Motley; a plate of dates entices some Egyptian traveller to describe to you Pyramids, and to elaborate the theories of Bunsen, Smyth and Osborne.

Mark and Miriam are also very hospitable, after the style of Cousin Ann: simplicity, generosity and a real satisfaction in a guest's presence mark their method of entertaining. Helen is fond of company, but company burdens her more, as her house lacks the thorough order of Miriam's: her children are more

unruly, and she is always in arrears with her work, instead of beforehand with it. She has improved since she began housekeeping, but she will never reach the happy having a time and a place for everything.

I think in our village we ought all to know how to entertain with grace, liberality and simplicity, from the example we have had in Mrs. Burr and Mrs. Winton. I notice that they do not give many set entertainments, but they are always ready and glad to have a friend drop in unceremoniously to tea, or to accept an unexpected invitation heartily given. They have small, informal gatherings: a few friends to dinner or tea. Mrs. Burr is so ready to pick out strangers—young men come to begin business, or study their profession, or lonely young girls come to teach: she invites these for an evening to cheer them up, and let them feel that some one has an interest in them. She notices, too, if these strangers have uncomfortable boarding-places, or are not feeling well, and they are asked to her house for a few days, or for a week. Indeed, I observe that, with the exception of a few chosen friends, the people whom she asks to stay with her for a time are those who will receive some good in staying—people in feeble health, or lonely, or rather poor. That is the way to exercise hospitality so as to receive a blessing with it.

Considering carefully the subject of hospitality, and observing how it is exercised, I concluded that we are liable in it to many errors, and fail, from ignorance, in doing by it all the good we may to others, or getting all the good we ought for ourselves I thought it would not harm our good ladies to have the matter well discussed, and I concluded to call it up at our Sewing Society. I like to bring up there some useful theme on which all are likely to have some ideas; and the discussion improves ourselves, and keeps out jarring, unkind or foolish talk. Accordingly I managed to introduce the subject of hospitality, and we talked it over pretty well, getting new views and improving our

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ABRAHAM ENTERTAINS THREE STRANGERS (ANGELS). *Page 269.*

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old ones; and then we resolved to lay it before our minister, when he dropped in about an hour before tea, and to see what he had to say about it. Our minister took to the subject very kindly, and when he was established in his arm-chair and we were all quietly busy with our needles, he held forth in something of this style:

"In the first place, my friends, hospitality is a Christian duty. It is not of the indifferent things which we can do or not do as we like, but it is clearly enjoined upon us. We owe its exercise to our fellows, in virtue of our common brotherhood in Adam, and of our closer brotherhood in Christ. 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers;' 'Use hospitality without grudging.' And the law of hospitality is not merely a New Testament law: the Old Testament recognized the stranger within the gates as a probable part of the Jewish household. We have not only Biblical injunction but Biblical example: Abraham, remarking three toil-worn travellers passing his shady oaks at Mamre, exercised a large hospitality, gave of his best, himself as a servant waited on his guests, and so entertained the Lord of Life and citizens of heaven. Rebecca, finding a wayfarer at the well, invited him and his train to abide at her father's house and became an ancestress of Christ; Lot, sitting in the gate of Sodom, showed the hospitality learned of Uncle Abraham; the old man of Gibeah shows kindness to the wayfarers in the street; Samuel sets aside the best meat for guests who shall come to him in the land of Zuph. The priest of Midian, who entertained Moses, lives forever in the annals of his son-in-law; the household of Bethany received everlasting life and glory in entertaining the Lord, and short Zaccheus casts a long shadow over the face of time as he runs to make ready for the prophet of Galilee. The early church, as we learn from New Testament notices and from early tradition, were given to hospitality, and they had their example from their Master, for when two

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young men 'said to him, Rabbi, where dwellest thou? he replied, Come and see; and they abode with him that night.' Now if hospitality is a Christian duty, it is incumbent upon all Christians, and this *according to their ability;* for it is demanded of us according to what we have, and not according to what we have not. Christ twice fed a multitude on plain loaves of barley-bread and some small fishes; his blessing went with them and they were enough. We do not read that the blessing altered the variety or the quality of this plain food; it increased its quantity to meet need. We shall none of us be likely to offer then a more simple entertainment than our Lord, but let hearty good-will go with it and it will be accepted, and we need not repine because our ability is not greater. The recipients of our duty of hospitality are indicated to us in the Scripture: servants of our Lord, our fellow-kinsmen in Christ; and then it is said, 'Ye did it unto me,' and we may entertain angels unawares. Our kindred, our friends, have a claim on our hospitality, and especially the poor who cannot pay it again, but whose account remains to be settled by the God of the poor at the resurrection of the just. The hospitality of a home should not have a superfluous magnificence and display which overawes and embarrasses the guest, making him feel ill at ease and self-conscious, while the hospitality itself becomes to the entertainer a burden too heavy to be borne. Our hospitality should be easy, brotherly, ready, and offered in that quiet simplicity which gives best opportunity for the steady conduct of our ordinary home-life. The oriental says to his guest, in a flower of speech: 'All that I have is yours; this is your house, command these servants, do as you please.' The Christian host makes no such shallow pretension of resigning the helm and headship: he intends to make his guest happy, and to guide his home in its accustomed way. The Scripture makes him responsible in a measure for the conduct of the stranger within his gates. We should not admit to our

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families those who will not exhibit to our children and servants a discreet example; if through any exigency such must come among us, the heads of the household should exercise their right, and quietly see that there is no infringement of their religious life.

"No Christian family should permit a guest to speak lightly of piety, or to carp at the Scriptures, or to profane God's name and day. The Christian family has always in its midst one choice and sacred guest—their Lord—and so they should allow no other guests to do despite to him. This ground is covered by the phrase, 'and the stranger within thy gates,' in the Fourth Commandment. This quiet, unostentatious, but unflinching conduct of Home Piety in the presence of guests has often been made 'an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners.' The steady light of holiness shining in the Home has led the stranger within the gates to the same clear shining."

"Well, really," said Mrs. Black, as our minister closed his discussion, "that's been as good as a sermon. I don't know but it has been *better* than a sermon, for it was shorter; we were all interested in the subject at the very time it was talked over; we heard it sitting at our ease, without a draught from a window, or the loss of our footstool to bother us; we were not distracted by anybody's new bonnet. Couldn't you give *all* your sermons in that easy, off-hand way, Domine?"

"If it has been such a good sermon," said Cousin Ann, "the next question is, 'how much will we profit by it?'"

"I'm afraid it will be like the rest," said Mrs. Black; "we say they are very good, and show what we ought to do, but we don't put them in practice. Indeed, Domine, after so long an experience you must have got done expecting us to put the theories in practice?"

"Experience has taught me that there will some seeds grow, for I constantly see large harvests gathered on all sides; and so, if many seeds are lost, many must have thriven."

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We were then called out to tea, and the subject of hospitality was not resumed; but I am quite sure its examination has done some of us a deal of good.

As to this exercise of Hospitality, there are several points which I have settled in my mind. I think no member of the Family should disturb the home comfort by inviting any guest especially disagreeable to any other member of the Family. I think a husband should not give invitations, or desire to entertain guests so freely, as to be a tax on his wife's health, or to deprive their children of her care. A wife on the other hand should not receive so much company that she cannot properly perform her duties in her home, or that she exceeds her husband's means. I think that one should never stint, and starve, and vex a family for a month or so, to launch out into a showy party: the true hospitality is to share what we have with a ready heart, that the recipient of the hospitality may not feel burdened by it. I think it is foolish to furnish a parlor and shut it up for the reception of occasional guests, considering it too good for the use of the Family Circle, so that the children feel awkward in it: our best things should be for our family. Also, I think it is very foolish to pick out the largest, best, sunniest room in the house, furnish it so well that we must pinch other rooms to make that nice, and then keep it for a guest-chamber, where five or six times in a year a few visitors go to lay off hats and shawls, and where some guest stays, perhaps, five or six weeks out of the fifty-two; all the rest of the year these best rooms are shut up and virtually wasted. Now, I think, the best bed-room in the house should be the *mother's room*, large enough to bring into it a sick child. The mother's room should be airy and healthful, because on the health of the parents the stability and comfort of the family depend. This "mother's room" should be cheerful, so that the children should like to go there and should have pleasant recollections of it as a gathering-place. Let it be as well furnished as can be

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afforded, a family head-quarters of good taste, and then, if desired, stray visitors can be asked there to lay off their cloaks: for mother's room should always be in good order, as an example to daughters and servants. Friends who are staying in the house will enjoy going for an hour to this pleasant room to chat with their hostess as she sews or rests. I think rooms that are shut up four-fifths of the time have a forbidding, dead-and-alive, touch-me-not look, which repels the stranger who is asked into them.

Another thing as to which I have made up my mind is, that people, in striving to be hospitable, are not obliged to allow guests to turn their houses upside down and abuse their hospitality. One would almost think this an unnecessary remark, but I have seen people upon whom courtesy was thrown away. I know such an one got into our minister's house once, and that, too, when the poor lady of the house was ill. Such a man I never saw: he would not sleep on a mattress, and insisted on a feather-bed being borrowed for him; then he said the bed-room was too small and that his bed must be put into the study, and so our poor minister was turned out of his refuge; he scolded the maids until they threatened to leave, and he complained of the noise of the little children in their plays—excellent children they are; he insisted on the best parlor-chair, their handsomest piece of furniture, being carried up into his room; and he was angry because he was requested to pay his own washing-bills, when his income was twice that of our minister. Things got to such a pass that the minister said he must leave the house, as his presence was increasing the poor wife's illness. Some of our church-members came to ask if I'd have him, and I said: "No; I'd sooner take a lunatic." I am ready to exercise hospitality, but not to utterly unworthy subjects; if patience ceases to be a virtue, so does hospitality. However, I think that was an exceptional case.

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When Hester and I were among the mountains, we saw a little log-house where a genuine hospitality was exercised. It was on the road to a logging-camp, and the wood-cutters passed by it on their journeys. Not far from the house was a cool spring under some trees. The good woman of the house had put in the shade some benches; she kept some drinking cups there, and had had a basin for washing hollowed out of a block of wood, and she hung near it a good, long towel, which she changed every day; and here the workmen, hot, and hungry and tired, passing by, could stop, rest, wash their faces, eat their luncheon, and get a cool drink. When we noticed the arrangements which she had made for the comfort of wayfarers, she said:

"Ah, well, it's little I can do to make the world happier, but I just thought *I'd* like a resting-place on this long, steep road, so I fixed up that, and it's done good to others, and the blessing of him that was ready to perish has come upon me!"

Hester was telling me lately of the true hospitality shown to herself and Dr. Nugent when they were travelling in the West. They were driving by themselves, and stopped at a cabin to try and get bait for their horses. It was a plain little place, all the furniture having been hewn out of the forest wood by the settler himself. While the horses were eating, the good woman of the house came and asked Hester to rest by leaving the carriage and coming into her house. She brought her a cup of rich milk; then, unasked, brought a pail of water that she might bathe her face and hands and dress her hair after the long, hot ride. In all that she did she showed an unaffected, hearty kindness, which lent to her acts a grace which would have become any lady in the land. When she saw that Hester admired some specimens of minerals and some woodland curiosities, she insisted on her taking them; and as inquiries were made about the flowers in the vicinity, she hurried off to bring some which

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she thought very pretty, and which proved to be very rare and valuable. Hester was very glad that she had in her portmanteau a number of articles which she could bestow on her hostess, and which were gladly accepted when she learned that, as Hester would find her trunks that evening, they could be well spared.

Mrs. Burr, one winter, set all our town an example of charity and hospitality akin to that of the good Samaritan. One afternoon as snow was falling, a young woman, accompanied by a boy of five, asked leave to rest and dry herself at the kitchen fire. Mrs. Burr, seeing her enter the yard, went to the kitchen to inquire into her case, and ordered her a cup of hot tea Seeing that she looked very feeble, and hearing her painful cough, the kind lady next insisted on her putting on dry garments, shoes and hose which she gave her. Mrs. Burr said to her servant:

"Kitty, if you would give that poor little child a hot bath, I have a suit of clothes that Ned wore long ago, which you might put on him."

Kitty agreed with alacrity, and the child, having then a bowl of bread and milk, felt very comfortable. The poor mother, however, looked exhausted and feverish. The storm increased. Mrs. Burr said she could not send so helpless a creature out in such weather, so Kitty made a fire in a bed-room, gave the invalid a hot bath and some medicine, and put her to bed. Twice in the night Mrs. Burr went to visit her patient, and early in the morning sent for young Doctor Winton. As the woman grew worse, Mrs. Burr waited on her as if she had been her sister. After three weeks' illness, the stranger died. She told Mrs. Burr that she was a destitute widow going to her early home; and Mrs. Burr wrote to the minister in the village which she indicated, asking him to seek out her relatives, and let her know if they would take the child. The minister replied that

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they would do so, if he could be sent to them, but they were very poor. Mrs. Burr buried the woman decently, and concluded to keep the boy, training him for a house-servant until he was old enough to learn a trade. All the village became interested in the poor stranger, and sent things to her while she was ill, and helped bury her. Now that was a hospitality such as Christ recommends, which is shown to the poor, the halt, the blind, the lame, who can offer no compensation, and so the return is left to Him.

I think the very poor often set us an example of genuine hospitality—how they divide their narrow meal with a hungry neighbor; how they share their fire and their shelter with those who lack. One of the most hospitable women in our town is a poor washerwoman. I think in winter she always has warming at her fire some cold little body whose mother is off for a day's work, or some little chap who has nowhere to go after school, or some little working-boy who does errands, cuts wood and cleans side-walks. There is always a place on her stove to boil the soup or meat of some one who must save firing; she says, "it is no trouble to her, for her fire must be kept up." Two or three poor neighbors would hardly ever get their clothes washed for want of soap and warm water, only she makes them welcome to her suds when her washing is done. Indeed, she is a public benefactor, and with no means of exercising hospitality but a small, bare room and a fire, she yet sets us all an example of a hearty, thoughtful sharing of that little with those who need.

One of the most remarkable instances of hospitality which I ever knew happened thus: I was making a short summer visit to a second cousin; she had a very large house, and a good income. As we sat one Saturday afternoon in the front room, her husband remarked: "There is Mr. Potter, his wife, his mother and his three children. They have come off the boat,

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and are going toward the hotel, but I don't believe he can afford to pay his way there. Shall I ask them in to stop over Sunday?"

"Oh, yes: do," said my cousin, heartily.

The good man then ran out and brought in his guests. My cousin was only slightly acquainted with Mr. Potter; he knew that he was a Methodist preacher who had been obliged to cease preaching on account of a bronchial disorder. That my cousin belonged to another church made no difference to him: he felt that all the children of God are one family. He discovered that, with very little money in his pocket, Mr. Potter was looking for something to do; he thought he had secured a school, and, suddenly disappointed, he found himself with his helpless family on his hands, strangers in a strange place. My cousin kept making him welcome in his home, until their joint efforts should secure him a place to labor. In fact, the whole family stayed *a full year*, and another child was born to them under this hospitable roof. At last Mr. Potter so far recovered that he was able to secure a small church; then my cousin said: "Your family is large: leave your old mother here; I can take better care of her than you can." So indeed the old lady stayed, and stayed *nine years*. My cousin said she never begrudged the hospitality shown her, for she seemed to bring a blessing to the house, as the Ark of God to Obed-Edom. I am sure, for my part, that the faithful Lord will never forget to settle such an account as that in the mansions higher up.

After our discussion at the Sewing Society, of hospitality, the subject was called up one evening at our Literary Circle. There we sometimes give out a theme, and having distributed strips of paper, each member writes down a sentence, either their own or some quotation, on the subject, and these being read, the various opinions so elicited are discussed. When Hospitality was the theme, these are some of the sentences handed in:

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"Hospitality is the reception and entertainment of strangers or guests, without reward."—*Webster.*

"Hospitality I have found as universal as the face of man" —*Ledyard.*

"The derivation of this word is from *hospes*, a guest; thence *hospital*, a place for receiving guests, a refuge for those in need; formerly freely applied to schools and endowed institutions of learning: thereafter applied to places for the reception of the sick or injured. Knights Hospitallers were a chivalric order of the middle ages, devoted to the succor of pilgrims to the holy sepulchre, and to the promotion of learning. Their headquarters were first at Jerusalem, and then at Malta; their defence of Malta against the sultans was one of the most gallant achievements of history."

"Hospitality seems to be of the noblest instincts of the heart; a primitive virtue, most warmly exercised in early and untutored ages. It was especially a virtue of our ancestors, and seems to be rather dying out, than increasing, in the light of civilization."

"Hospitality: a charming virtue, perishing gradually under the inroads of steam-cars and a hotel system."

After reading these, and other sentences, we began to discuss the question whether the grace of hospitality was decreasing. The extravagance of the present age, the emulation in the style of living, and the false shame felt at living plainly, were alleged as reasons why people now less freely than formerly entertained guests. The increased means of locomotion, whereby the corrupt classes of the cities passed more freely from place to place, rendering people suspicious of strangers, and not willing to entertain them, was another reason offered for a decrease in that genial hospitality wherewith our forefathers received each belated traveller, and made him welcome to their hearth. Cousin Ann told us that her pastor, a holy old man, years ago, when

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two nice-looking young men stopped to ask their way, bade them, as it was late, dark and stormy, to remain all night. They came in gladly, were seated at the family table, and spent the evening in the family circle, chatting pleasantly. They knelt at prayers, when the good man asked for a blessing on the strangers within his gates. The next day the tempest was heavier, and the two were invited to tarry; on the next day they set out. Three days after that they were arrested as notorious housebreakers. The minister had in his house and on his table a good deal of silver, heired by his wife, his quarter's salary lay in his unlocked desk, but these two Ishmaels of society found all that belonged to their saintly host sacred in their eyes.

Mr. Burr said that before the electric telegraph, the steam-car, and the daily paper, people in the rural districts were so far cut off from the news of the world that a passing traveller, judge, schoolmaster, day-laborer or peddler was to the family in lieu of a post-bag of letters, and a whole file of newspapers; the information which he brought, seeming to put them into contact with their fellows, largely repaid all favors, in the shape of bed and board, bestowed upon him. From the host down to the smallest child, and to the maid in the kitchen, a guest came as a benediction.

Hester reverted to yet earlier times, when wheeled conveyances were almost unknown; highways were infested with robbers, and roads were full of ruts two feet deep; when books were only in manuscript, or were worth almost their weight in gold; then a travelling troubadour, harper, or tale-teller, was as the coming to the house of a whole library. The family welcomed him, and gave him of their best, and besought him to remain long; they learned his tales and songs to beguile the tedium of their winters; if any of them could write, they made copies of his parchments, to keep among their choicest treasures. So

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when the early Lollards of Wyckliffe's day began to go about the country, carrying portions of the Scriptures and of religious works in written rolls, and preaching the gospel, they were received with joy; their little books were copied; they were detained as long as possible to instruct the family and the retainers, and thus the hospitality which seems indigenous in England secured the spread not only of learning but of true religion, and the general awakening of mind and independence, which finally led to the securing of national liberty. Thus has English hospitality been largely blessed to England.

Mrs. Winton thought that instead of complaining of the demands upon our hospitality, we should rejoice in the exercise of this virtue, and cherish it lest it should become as a "lost art" to future generations. That is a very lovely story how Cowper was entertained for years as a guest, and Dr. Watts going for a short visit remained with his host for forty years.

Mrs. Black smartly retorted that it "would be all well enough if one could be sure of entertaining Cowper or Watts: for her part she would not mind having the author of 'John Gilpin's Ride' for a visitor. But, now-a-days, if one exercised promiscuous hospitality, one might show the most of it to a troop of tramps, who were thieves and cut-throats, and to entertain whom, even for a meal, was to encourage idleness and pauperism. She did not wonder that in the light of so many barn-burnings, and with the record of so many murders and child-stealings, hospitality to unknown individuals was falling into a decline and like to die; for her part she would willingly attend its funeral."

"The question," said our minister, "is, like many questions, typed by the British Shield in the fable, which had one side of gold and one of silver, and about the material of which it was not well to dispute hotly until one had looked at both sides. There is a use of hospitality which, like mercy, was twice blessed: blessing him who gives and him who takes. There is

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also an abuse of hospitality, as when one fostered by it itinerant idleness, rude, ungracious assumption, or received a vicious guest."

Miriam reminded us of the beautiful picture of hospitality which Milton draws in the Fifth Book of "Paradise Lost," where he represents Eve making ready the entertainment of her guest, Adam beguiling the day by accounts of the garden-life since the creation, and both the first pair seated, attentively listening to the discourse of their guest.

"The relation between a guest and his host," said Mr. Winton, "has always been considered very sacred. The Home spreads its ægis of protection over all who come under its roof: to murder or rob a guest, or a host, has been esteemed the very extremity of wickedness. The wildest Arab protects him who has eaten of his salt; if one of our Indians offered the calumet of peace to a stranger and led him into his wigwam, then he was that stranger's defender until he went forth in peace. The Levitical law forbid returning to his master a fugitive slave who had made one's roof his refuge. The most reckless of the Afghan robbers will protect to the utmost a man who is his guest, even though he should be willing to waylay and assassinate him after he has gone out from under his shelter. I have never read of any land or tribe where hospitality was unknown, and truly this grace of the barbarian should shine better and brighter in the civilized man and the Christian. Let us make a point to cultivate it, especially in our families, so that this virtue, and the blessings attending on it, may descend to our children's children, and that Hospitality may revive and not die out in the nineteenth century."

But I think that one of the very choicest forms of Hospitality is one that peculiarly belongs to people in the country, or in small villages. Of late the charitably inclined in cities have been appealing to those living in rural districts to receive into

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their houses, for a little time in the summer, the worn-out, indigent workers of the city, or poor little city children. Seamstresses, shop-girls, tradeswomen, exhausted, needing a change of air, unable to pay for such a luxury, would have minds, bodies and hearts revived by being accepted as unpretending guests, ready to take the plainest room, glad to lend a hand in home-work, thankful for a share of the ordinary family meals; city friends would pay their travelling expenses; the farm-house would not find itself encumbered by one or two such visitors—indeed, the healthful, peaceful life of the farm would grow more and more beautiful to country people's view beheld through these admiring, wondering eyes of the honest city poor, who revel in a dandelion or a daisy, who esteem buttermilk the choicest possible beverage, and a live chicken a thing to gaze at by the hour. What draughts of joy and health these weazened children from crowded, narrow city streets or sunless attics drink in the glorious country! They may live to be healthful, courageous men and women by virtue of these tumbles in the hay, this going after berries, and driving home the cows. Cousin Ann every summer has a succession of such guests, and the boys fitted up three little rooms over the tool-house, making most of the furniture themselves, for the accommodation of three more of these strangers sent by city clergymen and friends; while for a month every summer the best spare-room is occupied by some city missionary, to whom costly summer resorts would be an impossibility. It makes no matter if Reuben and Ann have not met him before: he and his wife and a child or two are welcomed as kinsmen in Christ. Here indeed is true Hospitality.

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CHAPTER XII.

FRIENDSHIPS IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S VIEWS OF THE COMPANY WE SHOULD KEEP.

I DO not think our village is worse than any others; but surely it is not better than others in the matter of keeping children and young folks off the streets, and in good company. As I went to Helen's lately, I found Tom frolicking in the street with a number of little fellows who have no advantages of home-training, who fight and use bad words. I took Tom with me to his own house, and when he was safely playing in his own back-yard, I began to reason with his mother concerning him. Having mentioned the boys with whom I had found him playing, I asked: "Now, Helen, does it seem to you that God has given Tom, in the birth which he has assigned him, any advantages over these children—any better opportunities?"

"Why, of course, he has," said Helen.

"And then, are you not recklessly throwing away for Tom this birthright, are you not nullifying these privileges, by casting his lot in with these less fortunate ones, subjecting him to their temptations, putting him in the way of the evil example which they find in their homes? Little Teddy Buck has no yard to play in, no home but a grog-shop. Society which is better off *does* owe Teddy a helping hand, but a child like Tom is not the proper missionary. Tom will learn evil of Teddy, and Teddy will get no good from Tom. Tom has been allotted by Providence a nice yard in which to play, but in permitting him to run the

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streets you put him as far as you can in Teddy's place, and subject him to the transmitted evil influences of the bar-room. Tom is happy in having a father who would use no profane nor vulgar language, but you allow him to associate with Jim Green, whose mouth is full of the vice and blasphemy which he hears from *his* father. You would be shocked at having a gambler like James Wall admitted into your society, but here your own son, 'playing for keeps' on the corner, is learning to be what you loathe. Mike Flannagan is coarse and dirty. Suppose Tom asked him into your sitting-room? You would be angry, and yet, as we grow like our associates, you are allowing Tom to grow like Mike Flannagan, and by-and-by, instead of a son to be proud of, and a companion and protector of his sisters, he will be a foul little ruffian, fit only to disgrace you."

"Oh, aunt," cried Helen, tears in her eyes, "you are too severe."

"No, my dear, not a bit. This is plain, hard truth, which other people would not venture to tell you, but in a few years, if Tom turns out a reprobate, these same sinfully silent friends would say: 'Ah, I knew how Tom would turn out: from the way his mother let him run the streets, what else could she expect?' Now I tell you in time, so that you may take counsel and escape trouble."

"But, aunt," said Helen, putting herself on the defensive, "we cannot keep our children always from contact with the world, nor from the evil that is in it."

"Very true, but God gave them homes and parental care, to be their shelter, until they are established in virtue, love truth, and can resist temptation. The child's training is always different from the man's action, although it served to fit him for it. You strengthen the child's stomach on milk and on delicate food, that it may grow capable later of digesting meat; you expect your child to walk, and *because* you expect that, you do not set

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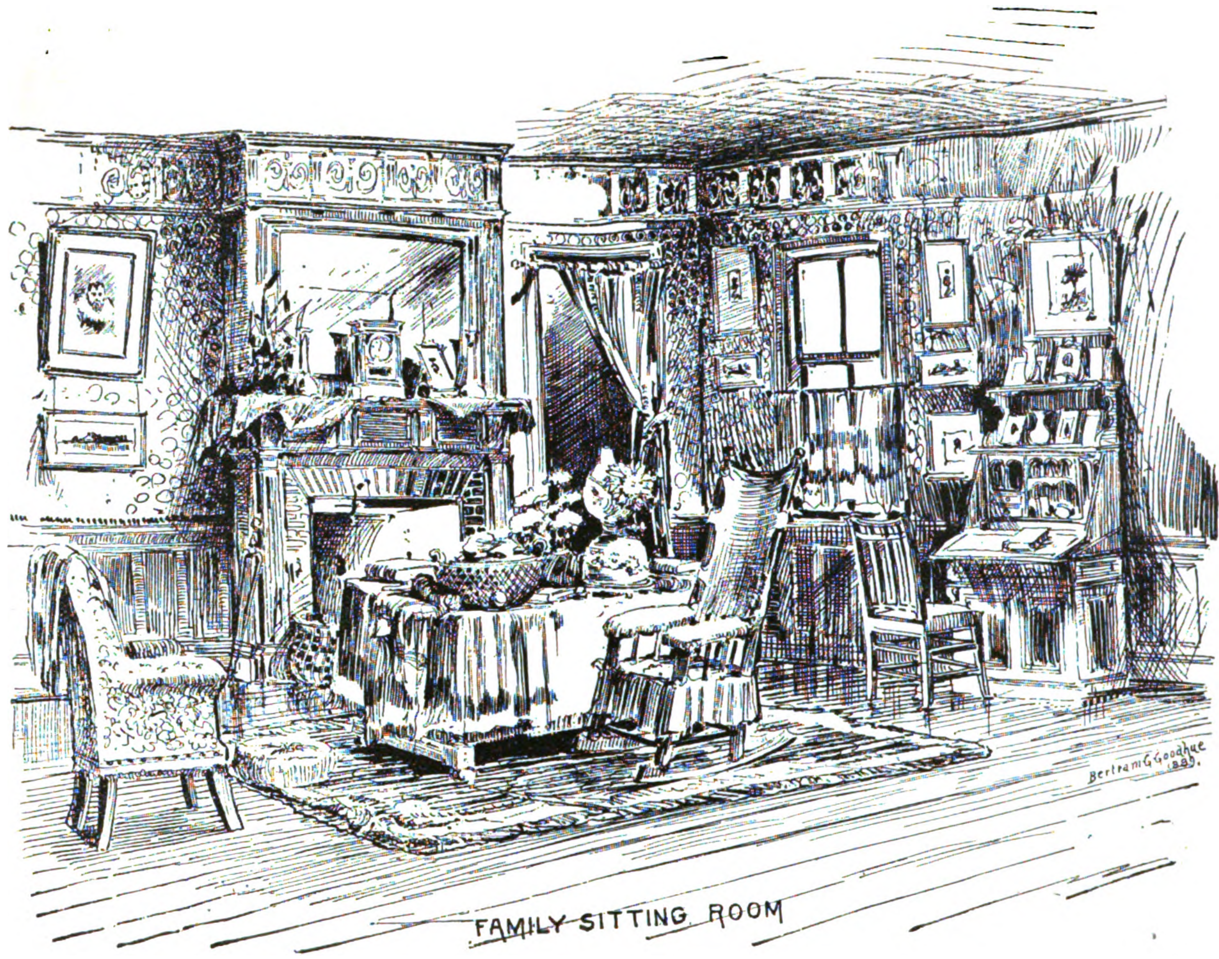

FAMILY SITTING ROOM

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a child of a week old to bearing its weight on its boneless legs, or you would have not an athlete but a cripple."

Hester had been sitting with Helen, and she added: "Plato says, 'A young man who is good is apt to be deceived by others, because he has no pattern of evil in himself: therefore a judge should be advanced in years, and his youth should have been innocent, and he should have acquired experience of evil late in life by observation.' What is good for forming a just judge is good for forming any man, and here the demand is for an innocent youth, segregated from vice, and learning of evil, not by crime-committing and remorse, but by seeing its effects upon society in general."

"Oh," said Helen, "I see you are both against me. I only wish you knew how crazy Tom is after some one to play with, and how hard it is to keep him within bounds."

"My child!" I exclaimed, "the very hardness of the task shows you how needful it is to perform it. If it is hard now, if Tom is left to the freedom of his own will, by the time he is fifteen he would be past all control; and that it is hard does not lessen your maternal duty. Consider the usefulness of Tom's life: all the happiness of your later years, the credit of your family, the well-being of an immortal soul, hang on your performance of duty. Oh, that you might see that duty now as clearly as you will see it if ever it becomes too late to see and do."

"Cousin Helen," said Hester, "don't blame Tom for being fond of playmates and company. Man is a social animal; the child only shares the nature of his kind. You do not desire him to be a hermit or a cynic, although that would be better than a rowdy or a criminal. If he is to sway men or succeed among them, he must begin by leading the life of a citizen, not of a misanthrope. Doubtless there are mothers who have seen sons go to the gallows, or the penitentiary, or have

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followed to a premature grave the victim of debauchery, who, if they had been true to their maternal task, might have seen their children standing in the highest places of state, or church, or science, and dying have been followed by the lamentations of a whole people."

"Why," said Helen, "you speak as if it all rested with mothers, but some who have had no mothers or have had bad mothers have done very well."

"We see now and then in nature," said Hester, "unexpected or abnormal growths, developments which are exceptions to a usual law, but we *expect* what conforms to the law. From a poor stock a better scion *may* spring; but rule is, good stock, good scion, and we do not *trust* to poor stock for better things If I tossed a valuable bulb or root out on that garden-bed it *might* take root and thrive, but I should be almost absolutely certain of its thriving if I carefully planted and cultured it according to its kind. Do not, Helen, try to escape the fact that parents *are the architects of their children's future.* Socrates said: 'A golden parent may have a silver son, and a silver parent a golden son, or perchance the son of a golden or silver parent may have an admixture of brass or iron.' But all this, my cousin, will be because there entered gold, or silver, or brass, or iron, into parental training."

"But," said Helen, "I do try to train up Tom as well as I know."

"Helen," I said, "consider this reasonably: you try in the house to make Tom a gentleman; you check a bawling tone, you cultivate a polite reply, you reprimand him if he calls names, and you are pleased if any one notices that his manners are refined. This you do in the house, half an hour or so; then he goes out on the street, he whoops like an Indian, knocks off the cap of some passing child, squabbles over his marbles, and flings dust in the face of his opponent, and finally relieves his mind by

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yelling at him that he is 'a dumb old blunderbuss;' then dodging from a stone thrown in revenge for the epithet, he stumbles into old Mrs. Petty, hobbling along to visit her daughter, and almost throws the dame into the gutter."

"He deserves a good whipping," cried Helen, indignantly.

"But, Helen, he was acting exactly like the company which *you allowed* him to be in; he merely yielded to the temptations of the position in which you had placed him. In his own yard, playing with lads of your choice, Tom would have done none of these things; your letting him run with wild, bad children destroys your own teaching. Suppose you *do* teach him the Commandments: if you let him play with children who, in his presence, break hourly the third, the fifth, the ninth and the tenth, the example will be far more potent than the precept. We are members of a fallen race, Helen, and evil seizes on us with a far stronger hold than good. Helen, your own conscience shows you your duty: do not let pride or indolence ruin the soul of your son."

"But what shall I do?" cried Helen.

"Why," said Hester, in her matter-of-fact way, "here is a card; now write down on it the names of four or five boys who in your view are fit playmates for Tom. Then call in Tom: tell him it is time you made new rules for him; that hereafter he cannot play outside of his own yard, unless it is in the yard of some one whom by your permission he is visiting. Tell him these boys named on the card are the boys whom he is to go with, and if the circle is increased it will be by you. Tell him that you shall permit no infringement of these laws; and inasmuch, Helen, as you are not very forcible in maintaining your rules, I'd advise you to lay the case before Frank, and have him positively re-affirm this judgment."

Helen, with a few suggestions from us, wrote her card and then sent for Master Tom. As he was coming, she said to

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Hester: "You begin the matter: you know how to get on with boys and I don't."

In came Tom.

Said Hester: "Tom, I'm going to take a boy out to Cousin Ann's to spend the day to-morrow, and I shall pay no regard to relationship in choosing him. Shall I take you or Mike Flan nagan?"

"Take me," spoke up Tom, confidently.

"Why, what better claims have you?" asked Hester.

"I've—I've got the best clothes," said Tom.

"As for that, I can easily buy Mike as good a suit."

"Oh, come now, Cousin Hester," argued Tom, "you don't want *him* round a lady like you. Why, Mike swears awful, and he uses such grammar *you* wouldn't know what he was saying; and he lies—oh, you couldn't believe one word he said to you all day!"

"Humph, a pretty boy for you to be playing with! How long will it take you to grow like him? If you run with him much longer, are you likely next year to be any better company 'for a lady' than he is?"

Tom crimsoned and hung his head.

"I'm not like Mike yet," he mumbled.

"I did not think you were acting very *unlike* him when I brought you off the street," I remarked.

Then Helen showed him her card, and laid down her new rules, with more authority than she usually shows. Tom stood looking perplexed, but Hester went on smoothly as if it were part of the plan. "And as you will want to have a good time in your own yard, you are to have a row of pop-corn of your own planting all along the back fence; and the top room of the wood-shed you can clear out for your boys to have shows, panoramas, and so on, in; and your father is going to put up some poles and such things for gymnastics for you, and when hot

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weather comes, I intend to lend you my smallest tent to set up in your yard, for your use, if you will take care of it. But I should be sorry to suggest the dreadful things which are likely to befall you, if you do break rules and run the street."

"Catch me running the street," quoth Tom, "if I can have BOYS here to play with, and *things* to play with, *and if I know I daren't.*"

Off ran Tom to examine the capacities of the top room of the wood-shed. Said Hester, smiling: "There is sound philosophy in Tom's remark: '*If I know I daren't.*' The human heart was made to be controlled by law, and it craves law. When I was at college, our lady principal, like the knight of old, had a hand of steel in a velvet glove. The velvet glove handled all things with genial courtesy, but if any one began to slip off into the ways of error, the steel hand under that velvet glove settled firmly down on the culprit with the grasp of a vice. To rebel was bootless: there was that calm, silent authority. One of our elder girls, who had lived utterly without restraint at home, was telling us one day how different school rule was from home rule. One said to her: 'How can you stand such a change, then? How does it seem to you?' She considered a while, and replied: '*There is a great satisfaction in feeling safe*—that a law is right, and as long as you abide by it you are easy and free from danger.'"

"There is almost no point, Helen," I said, "in which this parental or Home authority can be more legitimately exercised than in regard to the friendships of our children. The family is not a unit, cast alone into space: it is one of many which make up the grand sum-total of the race; in every department of life we touch on our fellows; we were born social animals, and we will exercise our social instincts, each for himself the centre of concentric circles, the sacred, inner circle of close friendships, the next of daily acquaintances, the next of business acquaint-

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ances, and the wide, outer circle of an unknown world. The little child must have friends, but knows nothing how to choose friends; his parents must choose for him. Helen, you must subject the moral character, the natural traits, the home-training, the manners, the language, the pursuits of your children's companions to the closest scrutiny."

"Oh, how can I constantly remember so much!"

"Why, child, you did all this in making out that card. You chose the minister's little son because he was good and so well trained; two little Carr boys because their manners and language had been so well guarded; you rejected one boy because he was so notoriously passionate, and you put the son of the tailoress on the top of your list because he is known as one of the best boys in town. Use always the care and judgment you have in making this list."

On my way home from Helen's I called on Mrs. Black, and as I sat with her we saw Belinda passing, with Maria Sellers. Mrs. Black exclaimed: "I do wish Belinda would not go so much with Maria; Maria is a bold girl, always running about the streets, and talking of young men; her manners are noisy, and she is very silly."

"If you do not like the friendship, Mrs. Black," I said, "why do you not break it off? Mothers have a right to choose the friends of their daughters. If you do not exercise your right, and so give Belinda the benefit of your wider experience and more mature judgment, she is in that respect no better off than a poor orphan. God gave parents their training in long disappointments, and broken faiths, and looks down unfathomable gulfs of wickedness, that mighty ruin caused by taking false coin of friendship for their own sincerity, that they might know how to shield their children from temptation, or to deliver them when they are tempted. If you had received a fortune you would make Belinda a sharer in it, and not turn her out a pauper to beg

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from door to door; and you have received this fortune of experience, and of seeing the effects of certain causes, and certain ends from certain beginnings and to know where danger lies, and yet you disinherit Belinda from that, and let her take her own chance of being harmed by harmful friends. There is nothing more important to children than the friendships which they form, and parents should look to it."

This subject of Home Friendships being in my mind, I went one day to call at the parsonage, and our minister said: "Miss Sophronia, suggest to me a text for a sermon: something of popular interest."

"I cannot suggest to you a text," I said, "but I will give you a subject on which I really wish you would preach, and that is Friendships in the Home. I do not think people generally know how important a part our friendships play in our moral and spiritual lives. I do not think parents understand their responsibility for the friendships formed by their sons and daughters. There must be common-sense law, and God's law to govern it. So let us have your opinions on it."

Our minister replied that he would think about it, and a few weeks after, he, having announced the theme a week before, preached on Friendships in the Home, taking for his text: "Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, God hath broken thy works." He enlarged on our Christian duty of forming suitable friendships for ourselves and our families. He spoke of the instinct of friendship as indigenous in the heart of man—a plant of Eden which had not been rooted up by the tempest of the Fall, but had bloomed in every age. He spoke of the divine warrant for our friendships; of Enoch, who walked with God; of Moses, who talked with God as a man does with his friend; of Abraham, who was known as the friend of God; of the tender friendship which bound David and Jonathan; of Christ loving and choosing the seventy and the twelve, and then

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the special three, Peter, James and John, for his particular friendship, and of that tender friendship with the household in Bethany. God sends his people out two by two, and family by family, and gives the social tie; and as "iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend." But over the exercise of this instinct of friendship God keeps watch: our friendships are amenable to law; there must be reason in the choice; the natural instinct rises to the higher level of logical preference. False friendships distract and torture us; the friendship of the wicked betrays us into danger, and brings us to judgment: there was wrath on Jehoshaphat because he loved them that hated the Lord. If our friends cannot be bound to be dear lovers of our other friends, it is yet impossible that, holding that relation to us, they should be their enemies. So a Christian cannot choose for a friend the foe of his Lord; the moral man cannot choose the immoral; the law-abiding cannot choose the law-hater. In fact, one of the chief elements in friendship is *sympathy;* and so are we known by the company which we keep, and are judged to be as our friends are. The friend of one member of the family is brought into contact with all; this friend then should be damaging to none. The parent must not choose a friend who would be injurious to his child: the husband, a man whom he cannot introduce to his wife; the mother cannot choose a foolish-tongued woman who would be a bad example to her daughter; the brother, a youth unfit for the society of his sister. Friends can bring into our homes moral poison, or honey from the hives of Hybla; there is no law of hospitality which would bid us open our doors any sooner to the bringer-in of discord, or unfaith, or vice, than to the housebreaker, the murderer, or the bringer-in of contagious diseases. Keep the sanctuary of Home inviolate. Satan knows the power of evil friendships, and he strives to destroy innocent youth by evil companionship. Are you, parents, on your guard against this device of the devil?

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Are you choosing the friends of your children, or are you leaving them in all the reckless confidence, the broad sympathies, the boundless faith of youth, to fall in with wicked companions whom the adversary of souls has spread as a net at the head of every way? Remember that vice is, on the exterior, often alluring. The evil companion seems, at first flush, liberal, witty, well skilled in all the pretty arts of life and society; unwary youth seizes upon him as a treasure, this lost one, walking in the hosts of light.

"Behold, how fair an outside falsehood hath!"

Young people in their first intercourse with the world have very singular grounds for choice of friends. A young lad will find sufficient cause for conferring his friendship if a stranger has a good suit of clothes, a jolly laugh, or the glory of owning a gun, a fishing-rod, a dog or a pony. Fathers should not allow their business so to engross their minds that they have no time or thought to spend on their sons' friendships; they are more likely than mothers to know the ways of the lads in the neighborhood, and they should see to it that their sons do not form friendships which are likely to nullify any good teaching which they may get at home.

I was speaking of this to Cousin Ann one day, and she said that people who live in the country, and have two or three sons nearly of an age to be companions for each other, hardly know how well off they are. There is a tendency in the young lads in the country to flock to the villages to chat at the tavern or the corner store, but this tendency can be checked by making the home pleasant, bringing into it plenty of books and papers, and inviting friends freely, and making it agreeable for them. The friends of all members of the family ought equally to be invited: that is a dangerous plan which invites the daughter's friends, on the plea that young girls are quieter and more easily entertained, and refuses to invite the son's friends because they

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are "too much trouble." Thus, the boys feel slighted, are inclined to go abroad to seek more troublesome friends than they would bring into the house. By having their acquaintances rejected from the home circle, they fall into a habit of keeping aloof from the society of their homes, say it is too much trouble to dress to see people, get shy and awkward, and soon sink to a lower plane of companionship than that to which they are entitled. Cousin Ann said her children never invited friends without consulting her, but that on her part she never begrudged a little trouble in entertaining her children's friends as freely as her own—in fact, in making them her own; and she always tried to increase the circle of their acquaintances by receiving into it all new-comers whose character would make them acceptable.

Mrs. Black, Mrs. Winton and Miriam met at my house one afternoon quite by accident, and the subject of forming friendships came up in the course of conversation.

"I'm sure," cried Mrs. Black, "sometimes I wish we'd all been born hermits, or had been wrecked on a desert island, I have such trouble with my girls' acquaintances. They get desperately intimate with some other girl for no reason in life, perhaps, but that she wears clothes which they admire, or has a chatty way in society which draws young men about her, or is a good hand at getting up pic-nics and entertainments. As long as they are friends there never was such a dear, and as soon as they quarrel, which they usually do in a little while, there never was any one so detestable. And one trouble is that half the friends the girls pick out do not suit Mr. Black's views, and he frets over the acquaintance."

"Such intimacies as you describe," said Mrs. Winton, "do not seem to me worthy of the name of friendship. They are mere matters of excitement and sentimentality, and girls who allow their minds to be occupied with such feelings scarcely

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know what true friendship is. Real friendship is based on respect; on something truly worthy in its object; it is without flattery, or jealousy, or selfish ends. We may have many acquaintances, but not so very many friends; and friendship, which is stable in its nature, sympathizing, improving, is something to be cultivated as a very choice element in our lives. I think we do not sufficiently try to teach our young people the true nature of friendship; how worthy it is of our best efforts in its preservation; that it is not to be promiscuously bestowed on every new acquaintance who pleases us for an hour. And, then, we parents should help our children in forming their friendships; pointing out what is trustworthy and amiable in the young people who are about them. If Mr. Black does not approve of these hasty friendships of his daughters, why not choose such friends as you esteem, point out their good qualities, invite them to your house, cultivate the friendship yourself? The impressible nature of the young will soon respond to these advances, and you will see your children surrounded by safe and improving friends. Those of us who take pride in cultivating flowers do not allow weeds to grow in our gardens, eating up the productive power of the soil, and deteriorating our favorite plants; but, too often, we take no pains to remove from our children those who may dwarf their opinions, or poison their hearts."

"It is a very difficult task," said Miriam, "to choose proper friendships even for our young children. Sin is always conscious of its shamefulness, and seeks to conceal itself. Hypocrisy is not a product of middle age merely: it often thrives fully developed in the heart of children. I think the very worst acquaintance I ever had, perhaps the worst person I ever knew, was a girl younger than myself—indeed, only eight years old. It was before I came to live with Aunt Sophronia; and this child, belonging to a respected family, always smiling, and

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pretty, and well dressed, was esteemed a personification of grace and a pink of propriety, while in truth she was a little bundle of lies, and disobedience, and badness. Even a little child I dare not select to be freely with my child until I know something of its true character, as shown out of the restraining company of grown folks."

"Now," said Mrs. Black, "if it is a matter so difficult to aid the friendships of so young children as yours, what is one to do when there are three or four grown-up children like mine? It really seems to me that the more one opposes some new flame of fancy which they have picked up, the more they are set on it. They will quarrel soon enough if left to themselves, but set yourself against the friendship, and it stands like a rock."

"I should say," remarked Mrs. Winton, "that this might be because your children had not grown up expecting any supervision of their friendships, and they resent as an aggression what you have failed to exercise as a right. I have never had any such trouble with Grace. I have taught her not to make sudden intimacies, but to sift well the character of new acquaintances. It has always been understood that not only her approval is needed in the choice of a friend but mine. If I say to her, 'Do not be very intimate with such an one; there is only foundation there for casual acquaintanceship, not for intimacy,' that is enough. She has learned to esteem her affection as a thing too valuable to cast away on the unworthy: if she detects the flaw she is wary. Sometimes, owing to this hypocrisy of which Miriam has just spoken, we have both been deceived; but when the true character is revealed, she slowly and surely but without quarrelling withdraws herself. When she has been away at school, if she found those to whom she was especially attracted, I have been particular to invite them to my house to remain a while, for I could not think of my young daughter having an especial friend who was unknown to me. I wished to apply my wider

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experience to the subject, to warn of any dangers; if there was something lacking, to try and improve the friend, that she and Grace might be a mutual benefit."

"I am glad," I said, "that you have touched upon that idea. Ought we not to lay hold upon this strong bond of friendship to bring people nearer to goodness? Do you not think that many young people who have been without home advantages, who have had evil influences cast around them, are rescued and taught to desire and attain better things by having the friendship of happier people conferred on them?"

"That is undoubtedly true," said Mrs. Winton, "and yet we must be very careful of setting up our children in their impressible youth as missionaries: they may be swept away by the stream into which they went down to rescue others. I have, indeed, for my own children fostered rather close acquaintance ships which lacked heart freedom enough to be called friendships with those who, as I thought, needed their moral and social aid. But in these cases I was careful to have the intercourse carried on chiefly in my own presence, that I might so preserve my own children from harm, and do my share in influencing and improving the others."

"I think," said Miriam, "that it is not merely positive viciousness which we are to eschew in our children's friends: folly is also dangerous. How many girls, who might have grown up simple-minded and self-forgetful, have been made vain and affected by friends of their own age who were forever talking about appearances, about compliments, and offering extravagant adulation! A child who might have grown up attentive to studies, and reading such books as its parents choose for it, becomes, under the influence of some silly friend who cannot write a sentence correctly, and who devours unlimited novels, a despiser of solid education, with a mind enervated by stolen trash. We should not allow our children intimacies with those

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who are brought up in a dangerous moral atmosphere. We may have in our homes strict temperance principles, and we may inculcate these upon our boy; but if we allow him an intimacy at a house where wine is constantly used, with a lad whose father esteems temperance fanaticism, and who scoffs at pledges and temperance societies, we destroy our own work in our child's heart, and give him over to the enemy. So, if we try to make our children careful respecters of the Sabbath, and allow for their friends those who make visits, give dinners, read idle tales, or go out fishing, driving or gunning on the Sabbath day, we build with one hand, and with the other tear down the moral strength of our child."

"Well," said Mrs. Black, as the three rose to go, "I wish I could put some of all these good things into practice in managing the friendships of my young people, but I suppose, as usual, I shall end with wishing."

"In that case," returned Mrs. Winton, "you will not rise to the measure of your maternal rights or duties."

I remember having some talk with Hester on the subject of the benefit the friendship of a cultivated and well-regulated Family may be to other people, who have not the advantage of such a household of their own. I think we ought to take into the circle of our friendships those who seem lonely in this world; God is a God of strangers, and for his sake, and for the sake of common human sympathy, we should bind to ourselves friendless hearts, because they *are* friendless and need our kindness. A good home owes it, as an expression of thankfulness for its own happiness, to try and make up something of the lack that is in other homes. Hester said she had often known instances where the children of irreligious, disorderly, uncomfortable homes, had caught their first glimpse of the beauty, the goodness, the sanctity of home, by being admitted to an acquaintance with some member of such a fortunate family. Led by this

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example, they struggled toward that sweetness and light which had been thus revealed to them, and had reached a happiness which their parents never knew. Many a young man has been rescued from destruction, and won on from good to better, until he has himself stood as the head of a happy and useful family, taught how to attain domestic peace and security by seeing the purity and happiness of some young friends' home.

"In a Christian Home," said Hester, "there is the highest type of all friendship, for there we not only entertain, but hold in close bonds of communion earth's grandest Guest—that home is

> "'Filled forever and forever with the shining light of Him
> Who redeemed the world, and sitteth throned between the seraphim.'

Thus every Christian Home becomes a city of God, and upon it falls the benediction of the seer of old: Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces; for my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee."

Sometimes I invite to my house for supper and for the evening all the young people of the neighborhood: the Burrs, the Wintons, the young Blacks, Cousin Ann's unmarried children, all the young people come to me about once a year, and enjoy themselves very much. All the younger children I invite for an afternoon in strawberry-time. Lately I had my young people together, and after a while they began to talk about their friends. Some said they had but one real close friend outside of their own families; others royally laid claim to a dozen or twenty. They questioned how long friendships were likely to last. Ned Burr said if they were true friendships, not passing fancies, they were part of the best things of the heart, and would last forever. Some said they had known of friendships lasting unbroken through fifty years of constant intercourse, and I mentioned that I had once been invited to spend a day where there were three cultivated and excellent ladies who for over sixty years had

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lived near each other, and been together engaged in philan thropic work. They were similar in tastes, in sentiments, in means, and the fortunes of their lives had been singularly alike; each had been left a widow, with one son, who entered the ministry. These ladies belonged to the same church; no jars or coldness had ever come between them; their friendship was a crown and glory to their lives, and to see them together was one of the most agreeable spectacles which I had ever witnessed. I told my young friends that absence and the cares of life sometimes caused a real friendship to seem to slumber, but at the call of need, at a demand for sympathy or aid, it rose again and was renewed in full strength, and so possibly some honest friendships which have seemed to pass out of our lives are only slumbering, and will be reawakened in all their vigor in the world to come; our friendships, like our memories, may be of our imperishable possessions.

Ned Burr, who is fond of argument, maintained that friendship was a higher and nobler feeling than love, and likely to be more lasting; love was more likely to be founded in whim, or a matter of emotions, while friendship must be grounded in knowledge and respect.

"Come, come," said Grace Winton: "you are arguing unfairly, for you are comparing *real* friendship and *false* love. We may fancy a friendship as readily as a love, and both, to be true and lasting, demand to be founded in a knowledge which creates respect."

This called up the question, What was the ground of friendship? Cousin Ann's Dick remarked that he had not experienced a friendship for all the people whom he knew pretty well and deeply respected. Though he venerated President Edwards, and doated on the poet Longfellow, and regarded Daniel Webster as one of the shining lights of the universe, yet if he had been living in the same place with them, and all at the same time, he

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could not have expected to count them among his most intimate friends!!

Whereupon one held that sympathy and similarity of tastes made the chief bond of friendship; while another declared that we preferred our unlikes, and that the first bond of friendship was to find a person possessing some traits which were lacking in ourselves. Gentle natures clung around stronger temperaments; a heart brave for any fate, and equal to any emergencies, finds the less capable taking refuge in its strength; it is vine to rock, and not rock to rock. As soon as some one declared that equality in age was needful to true friendship, then a dozen were ready with examples of strong friendship between youth and age, and we all agreed that these were very beautiful, and should be zealously cultivated; they were like the roses growing on the old gray towers of Alnwick. Some one next started the question of sex in friendship; have there been stronger friendships between man and man, or woman and woman, or man and woman? Ned Burr, who always promptly proclaims his views, declared that women were rather capable of love, and men of friendship.

"Ned!" cried Grace, "you just declared friendship the nobler emotion of the two." And immediately the young girls burst forth with instances of woman's friendship. "It is not true," said Grace, "as Tennyson hints in the 'Princess,' that woman's friendship falls a speedy prey to jealousy and pique, as that between Ida, Blanche and Psyche. Look at the friendship of Jael for the Israelites: by it she became heroic. Who will ever forget the friendship of Catherine Douglass for her queen, when, to keep out the angry mob, she made of her own white arm a bar for the door until that arm was broken? Shakespeare, who best knew human hearts, celebrates the friendship of Rosalind and Celia; and what does he say of Helena and Hermia?

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"'Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds
Had been incorporate."

"Yes," said Sara; "and where did friendship have a more complete expression than in those 'Ladies of Langollen,' the Lady Eleanore Butler and Miss Ponsonby? who, forsaking relatives, fortune and society for each other, with one faithful servant, retired to a small cottage in Wales, where for fifty years they lived in unbroken friendship, and were finally buried, friends and devoted servant, in one grave. Such a friendship we see between Madame de Staël and Madame Recamier: these two accomplished women endured for each other's sakes danger and exile; by each, self was forgotten for her friend; courageous in adversity, faithful unto death and beyond death, they proved true that 'a friend loveth at all times.'"

"That," said Hester, "is a pretty story told us by an old writer, Thomas Heywood, of a fair maiden named Bona, who lived in a cloister with a dear friend. This maiden friend lying near to death, Bona laid herself by her side, and earnestly prayed God to take her life also; and, in truth, the two died on the same day, and were buried in one grave. And Madame Swetchine is another instance of a woman capable of entertaining sincere and lasting friendship; and Lacordaire speaks thus of her friend, the deaf mute Parisse, in Madame Swetchine's funeral sermon: 'As we watched the sad setting of that beautiful star, I saw her beloved mute following her with her eyes from the adjoining chamber, the vigilant sentinel of a life which had been so lavish of itself, and whose life went out with faithful friendship on the one side, and grateful poverty on the other.' Madame Swetchine's life was full of friendships."

"To the rescue!" shouted Ned. "They overwhelm us with instances! Let us retort in kind. Who has not heard of the friendship of David for Jonathan, and of Damon and Pythias?

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Consider the case of Ulysses and Agamemnon, and Œdipus and Philoctetes. Who held a stauncher friendship than that of Walter Raleigh for Philip Sidney, model of a knightly man?"

"Yes," cried another of the young men; "and what an honest friendship united Horace and Mæcenas! The poetic soul of Dante leaned on Guido Cavalcanti, and seven years of exile were spent by that greatest of Italians in the house of the Lord of Ravenna. 'Rare is it,' says Dante, 'for exiles to meet with friends.' We see, also, Petrarch flying from a world where almost every chord fell jarringly on his over-sensitive spirit, and in the shades of Vaucluse finding consolation with his friend Philip. It is said of Petrarch that 'his friends idolized him, and welcomed him with tears of joy as if he were an angel.'"

"I do not remember," said Dick, "of a finer trio of friends than Coleridge, Wordsworth and Lamb. Chopin, the composer, was a man sickly, ardent, irritable, to whose overwrought mind even ordinary life was an intense pain. He was a man to suffer until he went mad, unless some shield could be interposed between him and the world. Such a shield he found in his friend Liszt. For years Liszt sheltered him from criticism, and business care, and curiosity; soothed him in death; and finally became his interpreter to the world by writing his life, showing what, among the jarring discords of his existence, had been the tender harmonies of his soul. Milton, neglected by his daughters and unloved by his wife, bereaved of Cromwell and taunted by the Duke of York, found consolation in Andrew Marvel—perhaps better fitted than any man of that day to sympathize with his aspirations, his researches, or his lofty imaginings; while a healthful quaintness and quietness of spirit kept him fresh and strong. So many and devoted have been the friendships of men, that *friendship* has been by some asserted to be especially a man's emotion."

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"There is a third party to the contest," I said, laughing. "I will tell you of some remarkable friendships between men and women. Beyond the natural love of brothers and sisters was the tie of friendship between Charles and Mary Lamb, and between the poet Whittier and his youngest sister, of whom he writes:

"'But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh;
A loss in all familiar things.'

"The element of a lofty friendship entered into the married life of Lord and Lady Russel, the Arctic explorer Franklin and his wife; also of Roland and his wife. Shah Jehan, who set up over his beloved wife the Taj, that 'dream in marble,' the wonder of the world, records in it friendship as well as marital love. Auguste Comte declares that the finest ideals of friendship are exhibited between man and woman, but Sydney Smith says that few of these instances have been shown by Saxons. The golden-mouthed Chrysostom was cheered by a saintly Olympias, and St. Jerome was helped on his way by Paula. Doubtless the gracious Apostle John was comforted by the friendship of that godly mother of a godly household, whom he greets as the Elect Lady. Michael Angelo's genius took higher flights, inspired by Vittoria Colonna. Dr. Donne devotes his finest verses to his friend, Mrs. Herbert, the mother of the quaint, sweet poet; by the death-bed of Locke bent his friend, Lady Mashem; and Cowper would have been a wrecked man without the friendship of Mrs. Throckmorton, and Lady Austen, and Mary Unwin. What a contrast of character met in the friendship of Hannah More and Garrick!"

"I have arrived at some conclusions," said Dick, who had been diligently dotting down ideas on a sheet of paper. "Listen. Friendship is one of the noblest emotions of the heart; it has divine warrant and example, and is needful to our proper moral

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development. It is capable of elevating us by a worthy object; of injuring us by unworthy bestowal. Like love, if entered into in haste, it may be repented at leisure. Parents should, with care and sympathy, encourage and direct the friendships of their children. By friendship, good is brought into a home, and the good in the home is given a broader circle of influence. Friendship is formed between those like, on behalf of similarity, and between those who are unlike in very virtue of the difference; it has no limits of age, of race or of sex. True friendship is neither selfish, fickle nor established for self-interest and avarice: only counterfeit friendship exhibits these qualities. A true friendship is rooted in respect and in knowledge; grows sensibly or insensibly, and is lasting as the soul which feels it. Friendship is the peer, the 'noble brother,' of love. Friendship has been equally exhibited by both men and women, and has given equally remarkable exhibitions between man and woman, man and man, woman and woman."

And so ended our long talk about Friendship.

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CHAPTER XIII.

GOOD MANNERS IN THE HOME.

WHAT AUNT SOPHRONIA THINKS IS FAMILY COURTESY.

GRACE WINTON came in to see me for a little while yesterday, and when she left I fell to thinking of the remark made by a famous essayist: "A beautiful form is better than a beautiful face, and beautiful behavior is better than a beautiful form: it gives a higher pleasure than pictures or statues; it is the finest of the fine arts." Grace is lovely in face and form, but lovelier still in her manners. Now, in what does this charm of manner consist? Is it that she understands and puts in practice certain rules of good-breeding, which have obtained place by the common consent of society for many years? It is something higher than that—it is what Dr. Witherspoon explains as "true courtesy, which is real kindness kindly expressed."

I remember when Mary Watkins was a little girl, Mrs. Smalley, her mother, came to me one day, and said: "Miss Sophronia, I want Mary to have good manners, and to know how to behave herself when she is away from home; I wish you would tell me of some real good book on etiquette."

"If you wish Mary to have really good manners, Mrs. Smalley," I replied, "don't let her see a paper or a book on etiquette. It has been well said, 'The effect of books on etiquette is to make one think of himself, rather than of others; while thinking of others, rather than of self, is the essence of true courtesy.' If you give Mary a book crowded with rules as to how to

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behave herself, her mind will be so occupied with those rules, and with wondering how she shall conform to them, or fearing that she shall fail, that she will indubitably fail in the best courtesies. She will be socially tithing 'mint and anise and cumin, and forgetting the weightier matters of the law.' Thus, while wondering if she has made a proper bow, is holding her elbows properly or has entered the room gracefully, she will forget to pick up the fan which some elderly lady has let fall, or to reply properly in simple kindness to some remark addressed to her."

"Well, but how will Mary learn good manners?"

"Good manners, Mrs. Smalley, are not bred in moments, but in years. They are not things which can be taken up and laid down at pleasure. They are not a best gown to wear abroad and lock up at home. They are cultivated not out of books, but in homes and in our every-day life. They must attend us as our atmosphere wherever we are. If Mary is to have good manners, they will only be obtained by putting daily in practice at home the best that you know or see, by avoiding for her rude, uncourteous companions, and giving her a proper amount of social life among the truly refined, whom you wish her to be like. The first and highest law of good manners is, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;' and the only really valuable book on courtesy is the Bible. An intelligent child, taught always to be kindly to others, to restrain all that may disturb others, to cultivate the mind, so as to have in reserve suitable themes for conversation, and to be able to take a part in discussing the ordinary topics of the day, with keen intelligence will note the numberless little acts and politenesses which make up good manners, and will cultivate them without mannerisms or affectations. The first examples and teachers of good manners should be parents, and the child should consider its home the first and finest place where it can put in practice the courtesies of life."

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Mrs. Smalley suffered herself to be persuaded not to get Mary a book on etiquette, which, probably, would have made her merely affected and self-centred: a sort of puppet, not spontaneously doing the right thing at the right time, but going in rotation through the practice of certain half-apprehended rules, which would not fit one-tenth part of the circumstances in which she was placed. If we went to live in France, we would wish to know the French language, so that we could understand all that was said to us and know how to reply. We should not wish to trust to learning by heart a phrase-book, the sentences of which might or might not suit our needs. So good manners are to be the language of our homes and of our lives, and not a mere phrase-book etiquette which might or might not fit our exigencies.

Parents cannot be too particular in training their children into good manners from their earliest years. If such training is neglected in childhood, the early want will be patent all through life. The parent can hardly give the child an inheritance which is more valuable, while in itself it costs nothing. In the business of life, I know nothing which has a higher pecuniary value.

"You paid a hundred dollars too much," said a gentleman to an insurance agent, who had been settling with a lady for the damages of a fire. "It was her valuation," said the agent. "She believed it to be correct, and I *could not* question it: her manners were so perfect. It would have been money in my pocket if I had been dealing with some rude boor."

"Manners makyeth men," wrote Wykham, an ancient author, and a lapse of years does not make an alteration in this testimony. We hear Emerson rising up to declare: "Give a boy address and accomplishments, and you give him the mastery of places and fortunes wherever he goes."

A wealthy gentleman brought into his library a costly sub-

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scription book. "My dear," said his wife, "you already had a copy of that work." "I knew I did," he replied; "but the manners of the lad who sold this were so elegant that it was a true pleasure to purchase it."

If we wish to mould clay, or plaster of Paris, or metal, into any shape, we must not wait until it is half-hard before we put it into the mould, for then it will be full of flaws and roughnesses, and will not well take the desired form. So if we wish to mould the heart and mind into good manners, we must not wait until a child is half-grown before we begin the training. We must begin with the young child. Greet its waking with a smile and a loving word, that it may learn to wake up pleasantly. Teach it to take gently what is offered it, not snatching, and to return the look and word of thanks. Teach it to share its treasures, to pity and soothe any one who is sick or sad, to pick up what is dropped by its elders, to lend its toys, to reply kindly, to say "please," "thank you," and "good-bye"—indeed, there are hundreds of ways to teach a little one good manners.

I have observed that boys after they reach the mature age of eight or nine generally have a severe attack of *ill* manners; they suddenly feel that good manners are girlish, or babyish; that they can only be manly if they stamp, bang doors, contradict, bawl instead of speaking, tease, fight for their own way—and they call it foppish and dandyfied to avoid these exhibitions. Just here is the time when maternal patience in training a *gentleman* must not fail; when it must be thoroughly inculcated on the boy, that good manners are of the manliest of manly ways; that there are a thousand gentle and engaging ways which belong to true men, and not to fops or dandies—to smile charmingly, to bow with grace, to be quick and unobtrusive in offering a service, to use respectful language, to avoid unseemly noise and haste, is to be gentlemanly—not to possess these graces is to be a boor. Frank, genial, graceful, self-forgetting manners,

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will make up for a lack of fortune or beauty, and their possessor will be welcome wherever he goes.

Helen has been very particular to train her children to be polite, and she was greatly tried when Tom reached the crisis which I have just mentioned, and thought when he laid by knee-breeches and rocking-horses it was time to dispense with good manners. He was fond of teasing, and he teased Hannah and his little sisters and the cat and the baby. I had a talk with him one day about this. I told him it was a mark of a shallow, weak, unmanly spirit to find pleasure in giving annoyance. I taught him what Wordsworth says:

> "Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
> With sorrow to the meanest thing that feels,"

and then I gave him a little book, where I had him write down several sentences on the subject, as: "Fair manners are the mantle of fair minds;" "Civility costs nothing, and buys everything;" "A true gentleman is recognized by his regard for the rights and feelings of others, even in matters the most trivial;" "A rude man is generally assumed to be a bad man."

"But, Aunt Sophronia," said Tom, "don't you think that people sometimes act worse than they feel?"

"Yes," I said; "a man's manners may be less gracious than his heart is true and kindly, but incurably bad manners are the outcome of a bad, thoughtless, cruel heart. Take notice, Tom, that the well-feeling man does not *try* to act worse than he feels: he tries to act as well as he can. No station in life, no poverty, no lack of cultivation, can force a person to be ill-mannered. Some of the most polite and graceful things that have ever been said, and some of the most truly polite acts that were ever performed, were by poor, unlettered people, whose acts were the outcome of generous, sympathetic hearts."

Hester, who was sitting with us, said: "There are many

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grown persons who need to be taken to task, as much as Tom, for finding their pleasure in hurting other people's feelings. He calls his way teasing; they call theirs *satire;* in conversation they think themselves very smart and bright when they are ridiculing somebody, turning their remarks into trifling, sneering at their opinions, or telling some unkindly anecdote, or trying to bring into notice some unpleasant circumstance. Now these people, either as writers or talkers, are not half so clever as they think themselves. It needs only self-conceit and malice to discover flaws. Talent and generosity are needed to recognize talent and generosity in our companions; all is discord to an ear that has no idea of harmonies, but it needs a musical ear to delight in music. These satirical people are generally really ignorant, and talk sharply about others to prevent any searching of their own shallowness; they are cowards, too; if you notice, they never attack those whom they know to be keen wits, and able to repay them in their own coin, but their victims are the timid, the young, the ignorant, the very ones whom courtesy would urge us to encourage, to entertain and console. The old duellist, we say, with his order of 'pistols and coffee for two,' was a coward, but the satirist in society sinks below the level of the duellist into that of an assassin."

"You have touched upon the subject of good manners in conversation," said Miriam: "we cannot be too careful to avoid themes which will be painful to those with whom we converse, and to avoid these requires thoughtfulness. How ill-mannerly to discuss deformities before some person who is deformed; or to express dislike of foreigners before a foreigner; or to complain that it is too much trouble to entertain those who are hard of hearing when such persons are near you! The truly kind, thoughtful heart has none of these selfish evils to complain of, and so in conversation, as in action, kindness makes courtesy."

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"A writer so old as Epictetus," said Hester, "gives us some good rules for proper manners in conversation. He says: 'If you converse, do not let it be about such vulgar things as dogs, horses, racing, fighting; avoid foolish and immoderate laughter, and vulgar descriptions of entertainments, impurity, display, and all egotistical remarks."

"I have here," I said, "in one of my favorite old authors, a few monitions concerning our conversation. 'Clothe not thy language either with obscurity or affectation; in the one there is too much darkness, in the other too much lightness; he that speaks from the understanding to the understanding does best. Know when to speak, lest while thou showest wisdom in not speaking, thou betray thy folly in too long silence. If thou art a fool, thy silence is wisdom; but if thou art wise, thy too long silence is folly. As too many words from a fool's mouth give the wise no time to speak, so too long a silence in the wise gives the fool time to speak, and so makes thee responsible for his folly.'"

"We must heed all these monitions with regard to circumstances," said Miriam. "We must suit our conversation to those with whom we are. If they can talk of and enjoy only discussions of domestic animals, and the common affairs of life, then we are in politeness bound to indulge them in spite of Epictetus. Why talk of the books and art for which they do not care? On the other hand we must converse with little children to teach them to converse: what they say may have much of foolishness in it, but by conversation we educate them at last to speak improvingly. True politeness in conversation I think is to try and interest those with whom we converse, and if it is our part to improve and instruct, we should not perform this in a burdensome manner. It is dangerous to fall into a habit of absorbing conversation and talking too much; so also we should avoid a listless manner, as if it were hardly worth our while to talk with our present company."

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"I have seen those," I said, "who prided themselves on having good manners, and who yet were in conversation censorious and gossiping: errors quite as much to be condemned as the sarcasm of which Hester has been complaining."

"Then," said Hester, "the rule must be to keep the mind well informed, as a store-house filled with treasures, gather up what we can upon all subjects, and so we shall be able to suit all tastes. Then let us cultivate our hearts that they may teach us instinctively to put ourselves in the place of others, to divine what will please, pain or benefit, and the heart shall draw out from the mind, as a wise almoner, the bounties which are needed, and shall distribute them where they shall most benefit. Good manners, in conversation as in other things, are a mutual product of the head and of the heart."

One day Mary Watkins was visiting me, and she said that the manners of Miriam's children pleased her much, and that she was desirous of bringing up her children to be attractive in their ways: how should she do it?

"The first thing," I said, "will be always to exhibit good manners in their presence. If we desire to have children or servants mannerly, we must first of all set them an example. Doctor Guthrie has some valuable observations on this point: he says in Scotland if you ask a laboring man how you shall get to a place, he is as like as not to roar out, 'Follow your nose!' Hester says she fears the Doctor is libelling his countrymen, for when in Scotland she met with the greatest courtesy everywhere. However that may be, the Doctor says the manners of the poorer classes are rude and unkindly, and it is because they have been always rudely and harshly treated by their superiors in station. He says that when he was in Paris a banker accompanied him to find a boarding-house. A servant girl came to the door, and the banker, taking off his hat and bowing low, addressed her as 'mademoiselle' and told his business. The maid

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on the other hand was the very pink of courtesy; and thus he found it in France: the servants, the children, the poor, all treated with elegant politeness, and *being in return polite*. If we want anything of our children, or our servants, we should not, merely because we have the authority to command, give a bold order; but why not use the gentle 'Please,' 'Will you do this?' 'I should like you to do that,' 'Oblige me with that.' When service is rendered, we are not to take it in silence, curtly, rudely, because we had a right to the service; but it is easy to say, 'Thanks,' or 'I am obliged,' or 'Oh, that is very nicely done.' These little every-day courtesies are called the small change of life; but we should be badly off in trade if we had no small change, and must always deal with twenty-dollar bills; while the small change mounts up to the great sum in a lifetime. If parents have plenty of this small change of politeness on hand, it will be put in circulation in the family: the children will pay it out to each other, to servants, to playmates, and with it family peace and family affection will be largely purchased. I have known Miriam's two servants to refuse a place with larger wages, because they said they had rather live where there were mannerly children even if pay were less. Cultivate in your children the pleasant manners of a morning greeting, saying 'Good-morning' with a smile and a bow; such a greeting makes the whole day go more pleasantly. Do not let the children go to bed without a good-night kiss: they are never too old for that. And how do we know but during the night-watches some one of the family-band may take the long and solemn journey to the land that lies very far off?

"Let the pleasant greetings, morning and night, to all members of the family, be a part of family custom; then your children, going out into the world, will carry these gracious home-manners with them, and use them to teachers, employers and friends. Teach your children to think for others: to notice

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when one is looking for anything, and to join with alacrity in the search; to carry, unasked, a fan to one who is heated, or draw up an easier chair for one who is tired; to bring the father's hat or slippers; to pick up what is dropped. I noticed Ned Burr the last time that I was there; his mother came in from a chilly walk, just in time to take her place at the tea-table. Ned knew that her feet must be cold; he said nothing, but went into the kitchen, took a hot brick from the back of the range, wrapped it in a paper, and placed it under his mother's feet. After tea, as he was about going up-stairs, he met their chambermaid, who is rather elderly, carrying a large pitcher of water; he quietly took it from her hand, and carried it to her room-door. These are the kind of generous little courtesies which make life go easily in families, and if they are to be practised, children must grow into them as a second nature. Cousin Ann was always very particular in training her boys to show good manners at Home. She said if they show them there, they will show them everywhere. Home is the place where true politeness tells. She never passed by an infraction of good manners in little things. She said: 'If they are guilty of some great rudeness, they will notice it, blush for it, and amend themselves, but it is the accumulation of small traits of ill-manners which will make them truly disagreeable.' The boys were never allowed to speak to or of any one by a nick-name, unless it was some kindly, sportive term. They would as soon have thought of being profane as of calling their father 'boss,' 'governor' or 'old man,' or their mother 'old woman' or the 'missis.' They never pushed past one to get into a room, slammed a door or shut it in any one's face, or broke into a sentence while any one was speaking. They dared not come into a room with caps on, muddy boots or pantaloons rolled up. If entering a room with any one, they stepped aside to let them pass; they never took the best chair, the best seat by the light or fire, but offered it to

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others. At table they did not reach across to help themselves, nor pick for the best or largest pieces, nor return again and again greedily to the favorite dish. When spoken to out-of-doors, they lifted their hats; they bowed politely to those whom they met, and never left the handles, Mr., Mrs., Sir, off persons' names. They were instructed to show their gentlemanly manners to their mother, their sister and the maids; to treat age, weakness, little children, goodness and station with due honor and sympathetic regard. Their fun at home was easy and happy, but not boisterous or rowdyish; they did not shout when they spoke nor contradict bluntly if any one were wrong. Yet in training them in all these little things, their mother was genial, while she was firm; she never forgot or ignored, but a witty word, a look, a gentle hint served to recall them to duty, or remind them of a neglect.

I have frequently been pained when I walked abroad to notice the lack of reverence prevalent among our young people. I had an occasion for freeing my mind on this subject lately, and I hold an occasion for speaking clearly your thought is a thing to be thankful for. It happened on this wise. I met James Frederick Black as I left my front-door. He asked me:

"What is the grand primary virtue for youth?"

I replied to him: "Reverence."

I met James Frederick again as I returned to my door, and he asked me: "In what virtue are young people most lacking?"

I made answer to him: "In reverence."

Then in the evening James Frederick came to see me as he frequently does, and he said: "Aunt Sophronia, it seems to me that you find the circle of virtues a rather small one."

"Yes," I replied; "I compass it all with—reverence; and what a notable and noble virtue it is! Look you, James Frederick, it is a virtue that is going out of fashion. Without it, character is a glittering superstructure, without any strong

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foundation. When I see a young person who proclaims by word or act that he has no reverence, I see one who will not stand a severe test of character.

"This being a fundamental grace, it must be laid early in the child's heart *by the parents, at home.* And here many parents fail. They find a saucy sharpness amusing. God has surrounded the child with the venerable, and yet he is not taught to venerate. Around him are the hoary heads of age, before which God has bidden him to rise; and, instead of that, he tramps in, riding a cane, and roars, 'That's my chair you've got, grandma!' or he hits old Betty while she is putting on his stockings. God's ministers are venerable, as ambassadors from the holy One. The rising youth hear their looks, and manners, and peculiarities criticised, their sermons carped at, their failings magnified. Experience is venerable. 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' is the word, and a smile goes round some giddy circle when the youth remarks that 'he could put his father up to a thing or two!'

"The house of God is venerable, and idle triflers sit there staring, smiling, whispering, irreverent to the place. The book of God is venerable, and the flippant jester adorns his tale with some misapplication of the inspired word; the breath of doubt blows across the divine pages, the open unbeliever mocks, the secret unbeliever cavils, and the soul which should have put its sandals off stands booted and spurred to wonder at the bush of flame.

"Pious zeal is to be reverenced, and yet youth dares and is permitted to ridicule the teacher's earnest plea, or to disregard the teacher's request, or sit inattentive in the class, while the heavenward way is being pointed out.

"And here behold this youth who has no reverence. Ignorant of the ways of life, his parents' law should stay his steps; but that law he has not been taught to revere, and he holds it

lightly. The commandment of God should be a lamp unto his feet, but that he did not write reverently on his heart. The teachings and example of the good should be his guide-posts, but those he never revered, nor meant to copy.

"What a grace he lacks! and instead thereof the flippant leer, the affected contempt, when possibly earth holds nothing more contemptible than himself. There is no dignity in one who knows no reverence; honoring nothing, of course they do not honor themselves. Growing up all one's days in a reckless irreverence, it is a strange lesson for them to learn to worship sincerely the Lord their God; if saved at all, they must be pulled out of the fire. This irreverence sneers at faith; it thinks it foolish to be believing and of a tender conscience; it is attracted by the bold and bad. There is a deal to foster this irreverence at the present day; many parents seem to have agreed not to demand the honor which is their natural right; they do not train the child to respectfulness, to yielding honor where honor is due. There is a bad tone in young society, and boys and girls are allowed to wander out of the safe restraints of home into this loose-speaking, and thinking, and impudent (they call it bright and witty) company. The land is flooded with a literature of sauciness, not to mention here the literature of open vice. The literature of sauciness always praises the sharp youth at the expense of legitimate guardians; the old are treated to light names and ridicule; decent restrictions are called 'old-fashioned notions;' pertness always succeeds; the heroes and heroines look for no higher guidance than their own wills. Fed on such literature as this, youth becomes as weak and frothy, but possibly not as harmless, as a bottle of root-beer. Lay it up as a principle, James Frederick, that the less you respect, the less respectable you are; the less you honor, the less in you is to be honored. There are those 'whom not to know argues one's self unknown,' so if you have no reverence in

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a world where there is so much that is noble and venerable, then there will be something terribly lacking in your own character. One is weak, and vain and ignorant—there is more hope of a fool than of him.

"Measure yourself by this rule: 'With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.' What! nothing grand and noble to be admired, obeyed, copied? Ah, the lack is not without you, but *within you!* And let me tell you, this youth without reverence is to be followed by an unreverenced and disreputable old age; and more than that, my friend, the capacity of reverencing something is in us, and if we will not honestly venerate what is good, we shall next be fawning and doting on the bad. The youth, who will not be reverential to Paul, will debase himself presently by quoting Paine! Cultivate with all your heart this grace of reverence.

"And as you know me to be frank in speaking my mind you may be the better pleased, James Frederick, when I say to you that while you are not as reverent as I would that you were, still you do not entirely lack this virtue: you are more reverent than many, and I regard it as a token of promise in you, that you are interested in learning what virtue is, and desire to have it clearly set before you—while you have the grace to come to one who is older to be instructed, and not airily to vouchsafe instructions."

Now, while I notice and deplore this lack of reverence, I am far from thinking that in these days we have no young people who properly respect their elders. I would not utter such a Jeremiad over the age in which I live. I think the reason why people suppose everything in the world to be worse now than it was when they were young is, first, that they remember the world as it looked to them in their young days, and not as it looked to older people. To the young, all things shine in a rosy light; they are satisfied with themselves and with their

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companions, and looking back all seems to have been very satisfactory. A second reason for this exalting the days of the past is, that year by year communication between all parts of the country becomes closer; we know of the manners and doings of more people; we hear of all the evil that transpires; and thus becoming cognizant of more evil we hastily decide that there is more evil in proportion to the population than there was formerly. Besides all this, I think we are more apt to brood over what is bad, than to rejoice in what is good: we sigh over fifty young people who are going astray, and we forget to be glad over the fifty or a hundred who are doing about as they ought. If I begin to think that our young folks now are all wrong, I have only to go to Mrs. Winton's, or Mrs. Burr's, or Cousin Ann's, or our minister's, or plenty of other places which I could name, to find families who are all that the most exacting could demand.

I was so pleased with Cousin Ann's Dick a fortnight ago. I had stopped to see Cousin Ann for a few minutes in the morning, and she was seated on the back-porch with a large pan of potatoes to pare, as it happened that it was a very busy time, and all the other members of the family were occupied. Cousin Ann chanced to say, as she took up another Early Rose, "Really, if there is one kind of work which I particularly dislike, it is peeling potatoes!"

Dick was sitting resting on the steps. "Mother, my dear," he cried, "there is not the least need of your doing what you dislike when I am on hand to do it for you; behold, how beautifully I can pare potatoes!" so jumping up he took possession of pan, basket, and knife, and began peeling the potatoes as quickly and evenly as his mother could have done.

I said, with all my heart: "Dick, I had rather see that ready helping of your mother than to hear that any one had left you five thousand dollars; I believe it will be of more advantage to you in every way, for a blessing always follows good sons."

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That cheerful bearing of one another's burdens, that ready courtesy to each other, has always distinguished Cousin Ann's family. Her household is always busy, cheerful and healthful. I think much of their health is derived from their cheery activities. Every meal there is a sort of festival, and it is a treat to sit down at their table, no matter how plain the meal is. The neatness, taste and order with which everything is served makes it a luxury. I said as much to Cousin Ann several times. She replied to me one day: "I have always thought, Sophronia, that a deal of healtn and of family affection depended on our way of taking our meals; in a family like ours, where we are all busy about one thing and another continually, we do not all meet except at meals, and in the evening. Those are then the times when we must cultivate our acquaintance with each other. I try to have the table, as our meeting-place, very attractive to the eye; to have it orderly, so that our chat shall not be interrupted by looking for needful things that are forgotten, or by jumping up and running about. I like the food good, and well served, and people tidy to eat it. None of our men folks come to the table unwashed or unbrushed, sleeves and trowsers rolled up, and boots just from the barn. In the entry-room, near the sink, where the brushes and towels are, each one has his own nail with a coat to wear at meals and a pair of slippers. There is a whisk-broom for brushing off their clothes, and while it hardly takes more than five minutes to make the change, it sends them to the table looking neat, and feeling rested and refreshed. I think it is needful to health and comfort to avoid coming to the table over-tired; one cannot then look or speak cheerfully, nor digest well. Now, after the work and worries of the field, the slippers rest the feet; the washing of the hands and face cools and refreshes; the change of the coat, and the brushing, seem to give a change to one's feelings, and we all get to table ready to forget for a little the work that is going on, and to talk about

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anything pleasant which offers. I try and have some subject for good conversation, just as much as I try to have good food. If there is a nice story, a good, kind-tempered joke, some nice anecdote, I have encouraged the family in keeping it for meal-times; a good laugh, and a flow of cheerful talk, helps a meal on wonderfully. I will not have troublesome topics brought up at meals, nor any disputing; as far as possible, we avoid talking of the work; we take time for our meals; it don't pay to hurry one's eating; if you save in every month the time of one working day, by cutting down the proper time of meals by one-half, you will in a year be sure to lose more than those twelve unjustly-gained working days, by dyspepsia, headaches, fevers, cholera morbus, or bilious attacks. Give proper time to a proper and cheerful meal, and the day's work will move on with as much again of vigor and good judgment. We like to have friends at meals with us; we don't consider it a trouble to put an extra plate and chair, and we ask our guest to partake of just what we have; a welcome, friendly guest makes our meal twice as valuable to us; we are the gainers and not the givers."

"You have always been very hospitable, Cousin Ann," I said, "and I think, on the whole, you have by hospitality gained as much as you have conferred. Your family are accustomed to good society; their manners are easy and refined, fitting them for any circumstances in which they may be placed. They have never needed to run away from home for society; they are acquainted with all the popular topics of the day; they have formed their opinions, and their opinions are valued by their neighbors. They are looked up to as an important part of the community."

"When there was company," said Cousin Ann, "I did not let some one of the children run and hide; I never sent them off, on the plea that they were not dressed for company, or because

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they were shy and felt awkward. If they had clean hands, faces, and well-brushed hair and shoes, they were presentable, and I knew that the shyness would grow with indulgence. Reed was the most diffident of my children; he would always have gladly run to the barn when he saw visitors coming, and preferred to lose a meal rather than come into the presence of guests. I felt sorry for the child, but knew it would never do to encourage the feeling; it would be harder to overcome the older he grew. However, I made it as easy as I could for him, and when the dreaded bow and shaking hands were over, he sat by me, and I helped on his share in the conversation, so after a time he became as social as any of us. Dick, on the other hand, rejoiced in guests; his tongue was always ready—too ready; he wanted to interrupt older people; to present his views before his elders; to cut his joke no matter who was cut by it, and he had such a comical way that he was laughed at and petted by strangers, and that made him more forward. It was as difficult to repress Dick to proper limits as it was to bring Reed up to them, and both required the care and culture of years. But these things are all in a lifetime, and such cares belong to our parental position, and repay us in the end. As we sow we reap; he who sows sparingly reaps sparingly, and he who sows bountifully reaps bountifully. Many sisters and mothers who have not thought it worth while to cultivate and develop the awkward, timid boy, find themselves after a while with no one to go out with them when they desire an escort, and no one to help them entertain their guests at home."

While I do not think that the young people are less genial and kindly in their ways and feelings than they have been in past generations, I do think that there is a going out of the dignified grace and scrupulous attention to little things, which made old-time manners so beautiful. There is too much of offhand taking for granted that things are right and agreeable.

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When among the crowd of modern youths you see some young man carefully formed by his mother, on some stately, gracious, old-fashioned model, he is at once a marked man for his manners and always a favorite. Mrs. Winton's two sons are marked wherever they go as "distinguished in appearance" simply in virtue of this scrupulous training. They do not make a bow by pointing a finger in the direction of the hat-brim and raising their eye-brows, but the hat is lifted and a bow full of grace is really made, and this by no means in a stiff, self-conscious way. They do not take a stranger to a house without asking permission from the lady of the house. They do not dash along the street and pass by some lady of their acquaintance who is about to open a gate: they open the gate, hold it open while she enters, and then close it. They do not meet one in the street, and amiably confer their company for a walk unasked. When they see any one leaving a room, they rise and hold open the door for them. Leaving church, they do not rush to joke with the young girls, and leave some old lady, or decrepit gentleman, to hobble down the steps alone, but their best courtesies are first for the feeble and the old. So many young men have politeness only for dashy young girls, none for the elderly, the plain, or the poor. Those Wintons would never have thought of leaving their mother or sister to go to and from some evening meeting unescorted, while they ran to offer their company to some young lady. They attended always first upon their mother and Grace. Indeed, their care of Grace was charming. They did not allow some lad to accompany her in order that they might bestow their attention elsewhere; but as long as they thought her too young to enter general society, she never went or came under other care than theirs, and now they exercise a scrupulous supervision over all the young gentlemen of her acquaintance: a young man must be marvellously well-behaved to be admitted into Grace Winton's society. Lately as I was walking along the street I saw North Winton,

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on horseback, looking up at a window and lightly kissing his hand with a very devoted expression. "Why," I thought, looking toward the window, "with whom is our North so enraptured?" I saw at the window his mother, and it brought to my mind the pretty little poem of "De Leon's Pledge."

Last winter we had a series of lectures delivered in our village. They were all very interesting and instructive, but I think I liked best one on social culture. It was very plain and practical. Some of the thoughts were these:

It is in general fondly believed that if hearts and heads are right, *manners* will be right also. And yet sometimes, owing to forgetfulness, unfortunate examples, or other minor causes, persons' manners are less pleasing than their hearts are true and kindly. Permit, then, a few words on social culture, in two or three rules which will serve equally well both at home and abroad. First, *Be sincere.* It is not needful to good manners that we use as current conversation those common fictions which many deem essential to maintaining a place in good society. We should not say the thing we do not think, always remembering that we are not called upon to say *all* that we think. Why seem to be very fond of Miss Jenkins, whom we like the least of all our acquaintances? Why tell Mrs. Jones that we shall be charmed to visit her, when we really do not mean to go? Why urge Miss Smith to come, when we wish her to keep away? That kindly smile which is due to the human tie, that placid grace which is due to yourself, will make you polite to these without resigning sincerity. And here be sure you do not indulge a hard nature by saying hard things and calling it honesty! We are bound by the Golden Rule to be both sincere and gracious. This is the first rule in good manners,

> "To seek that august face of Truth
> Whereto are given
> The age of heaven,
> The beauty of immortal youth."

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The second thing is—*Be sympathetic.* At home and abroad, no quality will make one so beautiful and so beloved as sympathy. If we cultivate sympathy, we shall be reverential to age and tender to childhood. Sympathy is more often the product of a strong than a weak nature: people who are half educated and imperfectly cultured make the ignorant, the timid, and the sensitive feel wretched in their presence, and enjoy making them feel so; while the accomplished scholar, the well-balanced heart, throws over such the ægis of his strong protection, and first of all succeeds in making them feel comfortable.

Now this sympathy is akin to another fine social quality, which I cannot too highly commend, and that is, *self-forgetfulness.* We cannot be truly sympathetic to others while we are absorbed in ourselves. We cannot even be self-absorbed and be sincere, for self-centring makes us dishonest to ourselves. Be self-forgetful. "Seek," says the Apostle, in that best book on etiquette that has ever been written—the Bible, "not every man his own, but every man another's good." There is nothing so graceful as this self-forgetfulness. Egotism is always awkward; it blunders, or is stiff, or nervous, or affected. Only in self-forgetting can one be interested either in other people, or in their subjects of conversation; and if we are not good listeners, we fail in one very important way of making ourselves agreeable. This self-forgetting is a good quality which improves with age. Whittier paints such a spirit:

> "Who lonely, homeless, none the less
> Found peace in love's unselfishness,
> And welcome wheresoe'er she went.
> A calm and gracious element,
> Whose presence seemed the sweet income
> And womanly atmosphere of home."

Being self-forgetful, let us also be thoughtful. Of all things, let us not be of those who rattle on without thinking or knowing what they are saying. This thoughtlessness is most dangerous

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in society; it spreads false reports, tells a club-footed man that mental and physical deformities accompany each other, and a Frenchman that it hates all things French, and then placidly remarks that "it didn't think." Not think! One thing is certain, social culture demands thought. And this opens another point: that of cultivating thought, if we wish to be agreeable and useful at home or abroad. We must be able to talk as well as listen. "It is a fine day, Miss Medora," says Simpkins. "Ah!" smiles Medora, "I *think* so." Dear Medora, you have been thinking the weather is fine these ten years. It is time that from thinking you came to *know something*. It is time by study and wide reading to make ourselves powers in society. Cultivate conversational talent. Language has been called the vehicle of thought; but there are all kinds of vehicles, from a Lord Mayor's coach to a wheelbarrow. But don't think brilliant conversation means a rush of sarcasm. Sarcasm is generally the weapon of the keen against the weak. Notice those who use it: they sink below the level of duellists into that of assassins! Don't indulge in ungenial words or acts, and trust to your friends to shield you with—"It is his way." You are bound to have a good way, that does not need excusing. What! am I talking of very little things? Social culture is a sum of little things. I trust I did not mislead you in saying that the manners might be worse than the heart. Incurably bad manners, manners insincere, unsympathetic, thoughtless or bitter, are the outcome of a bad heart. Therefore we may put all exhortations on social culture into one precept, and say: Be Christian, and in proportion as the gracious mind of the Master abides in you, his disciple, then, true and gentle, thoughtful of others, forgetful of self, improving every talent to its utmost, you will always exhibit the very best of good manners.

These were the leading ideas of the lecture, and I was glad our young people heard them, and I hope that, young and old, we shall be apt to put them in practice.

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Belinda Black came to spend a day with me, and we had a good deal of discussion as to what was ladylike and becoming to a young girl. I impressed it on Belinda, that whatever was good and becoming should first be used at home; that fine manners were not to be kept for strangers, to go on with our good bonnet, and be put off with our best gloves; but the grace that suited a stranger's table suited our own; the courtesy which pleased friends abroad would please parents and brothers and sisters at home. "A woman," I said, "who goes about her house slipshod and untidy, in a soiled, ragged gown, and only once or twice a year gets fully fitted up in her best clothes, will be sure to feel awkward and act awkwardly in those unwonted garments: so good manners which are not of every-day use will fit us but illy, and we shall be ungainly in their exercise; people will see that we have only put them on for show, and it will serve us right to be thus betrayed. As good manners are welcome in all places, so they are suitable to all times. Some people need to be up three or four hours before they can find their cheerful civility; they are well-mannered from noon until night, and ill-mannered from rising until noon. Never come down-stairs cross."

"A great many people do," said Belinda. "I often do; all things look dull, I feel dull, nothing seems likely to turn out well, and I can hardly speak, I feel so fretted."

"Then," I said, "you must have been sleeping in too close a room, or have sat up too late, or eaten too heavy a supper; you should search out the causes of these things and destroy them, and then these unpleasant effects will cease: your gloomy face and reluctant words will make all the family dull, and the day will move heavily. When you feel in this captious or heavy mood when you rise, try and disperse it: throw up your window, step about briskly in the fresh air, toss your bed-clothes to air, wash your head, arms and chest thoroughly in cold water, and

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rub with a coarse towel; draw and expel deep breaths, so as to fill your lungs with pure air, and send oxygen through your blood. Then you will feel bright and hopeful, and be able to speak and act politely when you get into the breakfast-room."

"Well," said Belinda, "I shall remember that. Now tell me of some of the little things which you think especially rude—the little things which we are most liable to do."

"One is a habit of singing and humming in the presence of others. I knew a young woman, very nice and well educated, too, who, whenever she was not absolutely talking, would go to humming tunes. If she walked with you, and a silence fell in the conversation, she would hum, hum, hum, in the most annoying way. It is pleasant to hear one singing over their work; but where two or three are together this humming like a huge bumble-bee may prove very trying to somebody. There, too, is that other habit of shrill whistling, indulged in by boys, and sometimes by girls. I like to hear a boy whistle and sing in the fields or along the road; but it is very ill-mannered for him to come whistling into the family room, or to sit whistling shrilly in the group gathered on a piazza. We are ill-mannered when we ignore the fact that in this world we are not monarchs of all we survey, dwelling in a lodge in some vast wilderness; but we are each one of many, and we must act so as not to trench upon the rights and comforts of others. We can lawfully exercise our own privileges only in a way not to interfere with our neighbor. It is rude for children to play, race and bawl on the street corners in a manner to disturb the people in all the adjacent houses, and no well-conducted parents, who desire to have their children become prosperous and honored citizens, will for an hour permit this. It is very ill-mannerly for a group of young girls to go ogling, laughing, shouting, loudly talking and calling each other's names along the streets. A true girl, Belinda, one who has a right to the name of lady, does not

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desire to call public attention to herself. She must be sought for. She does not parade herself to general view. She is careful not to act or dress in a manner to make herself remarkable either for oddity, display, showy colors, or extravagance. Her dress and her manners are simple and refined. Her good taste regulates her tones, her words and her actions as well as her bonnets. She quietly does what she thinks she ought, and has a large reserve power of intelligence, wit, accomplishment, kind feeling. She does not show forth at one glance all her possessions, as some people who set all their silver forth on their tables at once, but she has an untold inheritance and acquisition of valuable things, which will only be discovered by a long acquaintance, when day by day she will surprise you by having a depth of strength, and culture, and lovingness beyond your previous discerning. Such a girl is like an inexhaustible gold mine, while many girls are like the bogus mines, started by some crafty speculator, who has scattered a little gold and quartz along the surface.

"Another point where young people often exhibit great ill-manners is in a restiveness to reproof. An older friend rebukes them for some awkwardness or rudeness, and instead of accepting the reproof in kindly spirit as meant for their improvement, or as a thing which can be used for their good, even when given irritably, they are vexed, and proceed to justify themselves, or are forever angry with the reprover. They forget that open rebuke is better than secret love; that the wounds of a friend are better than the kisses of an enemy. This restiveness to reproof I think often hinders elder friends from making to the young such suggestions as would be of service. I knew a young girl once, who from carelessness, bad example, and a lack of watchfulness in her teachers, had fallen into several bad habits which were ruining her manners. A wise, elderly lady took her apart, and said to her: 'My dear, you have some rude

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ways which will much injure you. When spoken to you often cry, "Hey!" or "What!" You often nod or shake your head by way of answer; you fail to look at the person who speaks to you, or to whom you are speaking, and you are too bold in your manner of expressing a dissenting opinion.'

"Now, the young girl might have been vexed at this reproof, though kindly given and wisely intended by one competent to instruct. However, she took it in the kindest spirit. She felt that if one person saw these flaws, more must see them, and that it was well to know of them in time to check them. She thanked the lady, told her that she hoped she would always suggest to her when she was going wrong, for that hitherto no one had noticed these errors of manner in a way to correct them. She desired to be a true lady in her ways, and gladly laid hold on any means of improvement. As you may fancy, so eager and docile a pupil made rapid progress, and she became soon graceful and thoughtful in her manners."

I have no doubt that Belinda, who is ready to learn, was benefited by this talk on good manners. It is a theme which I often pursue with my young friends. Good manners are to a lad what beauty is to a girl, at once attracting an interested and kindly feeling; while to a girl good manners are infinitely more valuable than fine dress or showy accomplishments. Chesterfield says that the art of pleasing is the art of rising, and this is largely true: for some must rise in life in every generation, and naturally those will rise who are ready to aid and please others and so become respected and popular. We will not give our business, our votes, our aid to one who treated us surlily; we will strive to push him down to make room for the man of courtesy. And this flower of courtesy, choice as Arabian Spikenard, should be planted, cultivated and gathered in the Home.

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CHAPTER XIV.

METHODS OF WORK IN THE HOME.

THE WAY AUNT SOPHRONIA THINKS WORK SHOULD BE DONE.

A COUSIN of Doctor Nugent, a surgeon who is in charge of a State Insane Asylum, lately spent several days in our village, and Hester invited me to meet him at tea. During the evening the conversation turned on the causes of insanity.

"What," inquired John Rocheford, "is the chief root of the madness of your patients?"

"It would be hard to say," replied the Doctor, "for causes are so many, and often so nearly equally distributed. We have many whose mania is hereditary; as many more, perhaps, who are victims of alcoholic, opium or nicotine poisoning. Severe illness has dethroned reason in some, and sudden shocks, losses in business or family, or deep sorrows, have sent us other unfortunates. I notice that when any one passes, from excitement on religious subjects, into insanity, the unbelieving make a loud outcry over it, insinuating, more or less boldly, that religion is in itself dangerous and unsettling to the mind; ignoring the fact that victims of 'religious insanity' are those whose natural tendency is toward madness, which excitement of any kind is likely to develop; and that the disturbance of their mind has been not a true religious idea, but abnormal or moody fancies; while there is nothing more soothing to the mind than real piety, and doubtless it yearly preserves their reason to thousands of minds, which would be thrown off their balance by the

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·THE·WOMAN ·WHO·WILL·READ·

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painful circumstances of their lives, were it not for this fountain of hope and refreshment, this rock of strength."

"How is it about students? Have you many literary people among your patients?" asked Doctor Nugent.

"Less of severe students, perhaps, than of any other class. The mind occupied with questions of science, or philosophy, or history, has no time to become introverted, and brood to distraction over its own developments. I have many patients who are victims of what I am inclined to call paralysis of the reason: indolent young women most of these, whose minds being unfed gnaw on themselves and shrivel away."

"How is it about work?" asked Hester. "Does hard work send you many victims?"

"Work, like religion," said the Doctor, "has been called to endure many false accusations. I have had more patients sent to me by idleness than by hard labor—of these, girls especially. Boys brought up in the terribly dangerous position of idlers, social drones, by the very muscular activity of their make find something to do: they become amateur boxers, boatmen, ball-players. Society does not profit by these things particularly, nor will eternity reap much harvest by them; but at least they will serve to keep these young fellows out of the mad-house, where many of their sisters may go. The young girl with nothing to do begins to dwell upon herself in nervous introspection; she becomes hysterical: hysteria makes her an object of notice and sympathy in the family; she indulges more and more her predisposition to it; it masters her, by degrees passes into mania, and she is fit only for an asylum. I have had more than one or two cases of this kind, where the pains, and what we may call the social disgrace of madness, would have been escaped, if the girl had been brought up to sweep and dust, to make her clothes, to bake the family bread and pastry, to be her mother's housekeeper, or her father's book-keeper.

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"As to work, Mrs. Nugent, it is the normal estate of man since Eden: we may say it is man's natural condition, as Adam was provided with occupation even in the blessed garden. Now what is natural can be borne: God did not establish us in a lot in life of which lot the natural tendency is madness. Work, lawful work, does not dethrone reason: it strengthens both brain and body. *Over-work* and *under-rest* do send many patients to us; but man must blame no one but himself when he destroys the proportion which God ordained between our time and our labor, our working and our resting. Suppose I hire a man to do a week's work, and I give him food for the week; inspired by avarice he sells the food, and works fasting, before the week is out he drops exhausted and soon dies, when it was open to him to use both work and food, and reach the end of the week a sounder man than when he begun it. If I hire a man to move some iron, and to save time, as he calls it, he piles it all in a big barrel and, lifting it at once, incurably injures himself, who is to blame for all the crippled years, when he might have been hale and tougher from his work?

"A man goes to work in a field in midsummer: at noon he is warned to take one or two hours of rest, to cool himself, to eat, and then resting again, go moderately at his work for an hour, increasing his toil with the cooling day; instead, he presses on in madder and madder haste, taking no noon rest, but panting on in the hottest sun, with some vague idea of getting done earlier in the day, as people do who work themselves to premature death, striving in haste to accumulate a fortune for their age, an age which they never reach. So the man whom I am imagining, over-hurries his task, and dies of sunstroke before the evening falls. The trouble is not that people must work—not even that in the sweat of their brow they must win their bread—but that they set themselves tasks which neither God nor man required of them; they sequestrate for their absurd ends the hours God

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gave for rest; they deprive themselves of food, or, what is much the same, of time to digest their food—they die, or go mad. The trouble is not work, but over-work."

"But," said Hester, "are there not some mothers of large families, say, or wives of farmers with large dairies and too little help, who are forced to over-work?"

"There may be some such," said the Doctor, "but now we are coming down to a still finer point, and I tell you that over-work generally means, *ignorance of right methods of work.* You may *quietly* ascend the stairs of a tower a hundred feet high; you reach there but little fatigued; you seat yourself; look at the scenery—rest—return; you are none the worse for the climb; but start at the bottom and *run* with all your might up those stairs; stand purple and panting in the wind on top; turn and run down—if you can—and very likely you will soon drop dead, or die of a congestion, or lie all the rest of your life the invalid victim of your folly. You go over the same space in either case; you lift yourself but the hundred feet either way you do it, but the result depends on *how you do it.* I doubt if there is one case in five hundred of so-called victims of over-work where the evil has not arisen rather from the way of doing the work than from the amount of it. People do not know how to divide between the needful and the needless; they forget how minutes of rest lessen the total of the day's fatigue; how little needless motions, liftings, frettings, increase it. I have had victims of over-work brought to me; mothers whose large families needed their presence; whose daughters' lives would be blighted by the story of the crazy mother; these women would have been *saved* by having each day one hour's *rest* in rocking-chair or on a lounge, and fifteen minutes each day with an entertaining or soothing book, and fifteen minutes for a short walk. Why did they not have this hour and a half? They *could not:* they spent it at the sewing-machine, putting six-pin tucks in the frills of

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pillow-shams; sixteen narrow tucks in their daughters' petticoats edged ruffles on the little girl's aprons; frills on the baby's frock; puffs, tucks and inserting in best night-gowns. And here is the result: the baby has no mother to put on its frilled frocks; the little girl in her ruffled apron gets cuffed by a stranger; the eldest daughter, whose tucked petticoats wore out the mother's powers, and robbed her of rest, is a girl marked 'as perhaps inheriting insanity;' the fancy pillow-shams and night-gowns are stolen by the kitchen maid and torn by the laundress; the whole catastrophe was caused by a lack of common-sense; a forgetting the evident fact that the human machine, like other machines, cannot stand perpetual motion; that it must be rested, repaired, and oiled; that mothers are worth more than tucks and ruffles; that a long, hearty, good-bestowing life is better than a little out-doing of the neighbors in the matter of dress and furnishings. I heard, by accident, good, sound sense on this point, in this wise: a gentleman, fearing for his wife's state of mind, sent for me, and, unknown to the wife, we were in the study, adjoining her sitting-room, when a lady friend came to see her. Thinking the conversation would afford me good opportunity of judging of his wife's mental condition, I signed to her husband to keep silence, and, sure enough, in a short time the poor mother confided to her friend the fear that she was going crazy. The guest was known to fame as a poet, and I did not expect the burst of *hard common-sense* which followed. The door was ajar, and I saw her with keen eye measure her hostess' malady, and the style of tonic needed.

"'Go crazy!' she cried; 'don't you *dare* to do it; you would ruin these five little girls; what prospects have the daughters of an insane mother? There is not the *least* danger of any insanity for you, if you will every day ride out for an hour, lie down for an hour, and read for an hour; air, rest, and new interests are what *you* need.'

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"'But I have no time; you don't begin to know the time our sewing takes; why I spend two or three hours each day at the machine.'

"'I'll engage to get you a young woman to do the sewing that you do for two dollars a week.'

"'Yes, but that costs money, and I feel that I *ought* to lay up all I can for our children.'

"'Look at the matter practically: call in your arithmetic. If you die of over-work, a housekeeper will cost five dollars a week; if you go to an asylum, consider the expense: the seamstress would be cheaper. If you kill yourself by under-resting, you drive your husband to a second marriage, and three or four little half-brothers would materially reduce your daughters' portions. The rest and the seamstress by whom you get it are *cheap* in comparison with any other alternative. Mothers are not to be bought in a market at five dollars a head.'

"These sharp remarks were a revelation. The lady agreed to the seamstress, and to her friend's prescription of the three hours; and beginning the use of her remedy at once, the two went off to walk. I said to the husband: 'This case is in good hands; these three hours daily, spent as arranged now, will save your wife;' and they did."

"Yet there are many cases," said Hester, "where three hours could not possibly be saved by the mother of a family, and where it would be also impossible to hire a seamstress."

"That is true," said the Doctor; "but three hours each day may not always be needed. It was the last ounce, you know, which broke the camel's back, not the last hundred-weight. What I contend for is, that people generally do not know the priceless value of their physical and mental health, until they have squandered it; nor do they realize that a little saving in care and labor, a little rest, a little change, would prevent their being mentally or physically ruined. An easy-chair, an occa.

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sional quiet hour, a day's visit, a pleasant book, the being relieved from some petty, oft-recurring task, may save a brain or a heart just on the point of exhaustion. I think all overworked women, if they examined their tasks, feeling that there must be a saving made, and that saving must be in their own favor for their own recruiting, would be surprised at the result of their scrutiny. Why, I have seen thin, haggard, worn-out women, who were perishing for *rest* and *recreation*, instead of taking that needed rest which would spare them to their families, actually sitting for two or three hours each day *darning* into fine, fancy patterns the quilting of a bed-spread! This fanciful quilting would not make the quilt warmer nor make it wear better, but it would make it *fine*. A million times better spend that time in the garden raising flower-seeds, or in the yard raising chicks to sell, and buy counterpanes, if they could not be had without such management. I have seen women sitting up late at night knitting lace for their parlor curtains, or ornamenting children's clothes, when the hours thus stolen from rest would soon send them under the church-yard sod, where neither lace nor ornaments would benefit them. I have seen so many of these foolish sacrifices that I feel hotly on the subject. This ignorance is a Moloch destroying hundreds of our housewives."

"Some one," said John Rocheford, "ought to write a book on the subject, and tell women how to do what they must do, so that it shall be most easily done; and how to discern between the needful and the needless, that they may spare themselves for better things, and live out their rightful days."

"The book," said Hester, "would be well enough, if people would read it or heed it, but it is very hard to bring folks to give up rooted and perhaps inherited notions. We do not take much warning of our own mortality in seeing others die, nor of our own weakness in seeing others break down: we think

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we feel the springs of life stronger in us. We strain and bend the bow until it snaps, and then leave others to repeat for themselves our folly."

"I have often wondered," said John Rocheford, "at the different ways in which women do their work; at, indeed, the very different ways in which work can be done, making or saving toil and fatigue. I remember once I was out with a party of gentlemen on a survey, and we happened on a rainy summer week; the first evening we took refuge in a farm-house. As we were wet, and there was no stove up but in the large, neat kitchen, we were seated near that to dry ourselves, while the housewife got supper. Wishing to give us something hot, she made flannel or griddle-cakes. By the time the cakes were mixed she had a bowl, a couple of saucers, a fork, spoon and pan in use, and her baking-table pretty well covered with sifted flour; her griddle then being greased, she brought her pan of cake-batter, and with a large spoon dipped some upon the griddle; despite her care, some drops fell on stove and hearth; every time she greased the griddle she went to and from her table with the greaser, and then to and from the table with her pan of batter; in the meantime she darted hurriedly around laying the tea-table, a cup, a plate, a knife at a time, between whiles of putting on and turning and removing her cakes. She was nearly an hour in preparing her supper, and an hour in clearing it away, for some flecks of batter had fallen on floor, stove and table; she had soiled a good many dishes; her table was to scrub; her stove to rub up, and before all was in its accustomed order the good woman was hot and exhausted.

"The next evening our fate was almost exactly similar; another tidy kitchen sheltered us from the rain, and its mistress baked cakes for our supper. First she went to the china-closet with a tray, and putting the tea-dishes on it, in but two journeys to the closet her table was nicely set. Then with her tray she

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visited her store-closet, and brought to the table at one trip butter, bread, cream, preserves, cold meat, and so on. That care being off her mind, she put her griddle on the stove and opened the draught. Next she went to her store-closet for material for her cakes. She mixed the cakes in a large pitcher, with a strong egg-beater. First she put into the pitcher the buttermilk and soda; then she beat the eggs on a plate and turned them in; then put in the flour, salt, and other ingredients; when the batter was ready the baking-table was unsoiled, and only a saucer and an egg-beater lay on it for washing. She set open the oven-door, and stood within it two plates for her cakes, and the dish with her greaser; then she rubbed the griddle well with salt, and so only greased it about one-fifth as much as the other housewife, saving smoke and trouble. She poured the cakes upon the griddle from the nose of the pitcher, so saving all dripping, and between whiles she set the pitcher on the hearth, so that she had no journeys to and from the table; in fact, she never left the stove while she baked, but stepping back a little from the heat she chatted with us, and in half an hour from the time when she began to get supper she had the meal all on the table in an orderly room, and when supper was ended she cleared it away in half an hour. There was no stove to polish; no table to scrub; no spots on the floor were to be wiped up, and the work ended, she resumed her white apron and sat down on the porch in her rocking-chair, evidently knowing how to rest, as well as how to work."

"That's it; that's it," said the Doctor; "the thing is to know *how* to do it. Mothers should not be content to teach their daughters housework, but how to do it in the quickest, nicest way; not merely instructing in the ingredients that form a pound-cake, but how to use the fewest utensils, and the least time and trouble in compounding it; some women, and delicate women too, have a fear of seeming *lazy* in work. Whose business is it

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how they seem if the work is properly done, and their own health and comfort are cared for? Are health and comfort things of small account? We have societies for prevention of cruelty to animals and to children: I wish we had a society for preventing housewives and house-mothers from being cruel to themselves. They think it 'looks foolish' to lie down in daytime; it 'looks lazy' to sit while they pare vegetables, or mix cake, or wipe dishes, or polish knives; it 'looks extravagant' to cover their working-tables with oil-cloths, and to use plenty of mats and rugs, and ammonia, or borax, or soda for cleaning, instead of driving all their own failing vitality into scrubbing-brushes. And by these false ideas of 'looks'—I wish the word had never been heard of—they reduce themselves to invalids who must lie down all the time, or the over-active life ends in premature death, or the extravagance runs into doctors' and druggists' and asylum bills. How illogical we humans are! as I look at my patients, I often think we are all a *little* mad!"

"You impress me," said Doctor Nugent, "with the enormity of an evil which I never before realized. The book which Mr. Rocheford suggests should be written, and Aunt Sophronia, who knows how to do all kinds of housework in the very best manner, must write it."

"Thank you," I replied; "I am quite too old to turn authoress, but I feel the great importance of what has been said, and I am resolved in my little sphere, here in the village and the country around, to try more and more to impress on my young friends the need of taking care of themselves; of having a little reserve strength laid up for emergencies, and not every day over-drawing our account on vitality. As has been said, the trouble lies in ignorance, not in labor. It is not that there is too much in the world to be done, but that we do not know how to do it; we make our work less by having a right way of performing it Method is the time and strength-saver, and reason is to be applied to baking, boiling and dish-washing."

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How much and how often have I thought of that evening's conversation! What important themes it touched, and themes so often under-estimated! We do not live in a lazy age: it is an age of activity, and yet of poorly distributed activity oftentimes, where a few members of a family are striving to do the work of all, and fathers and mothers, or conscientious elder daughters, are doing the share of work lawfully belonging to indolent and over-indulged juniors: the one party getting too much and the other too little rest. I notice that these active people, when they are really over-worked and worn-out, attribute their weariness to any cause but the right one; they will not face the fact that they are over-wrought and need repose, that the nerves kept at their best tension for too long a time must be relaxed by amusements like little children's. I remember once hearing some one ask a famous authoress how she managed to execute such a prodigious amount of work; and she replied 'Merely by knowing how at proper times to rest and to play,' and a friend of hers told me that she believed this was the secret, for she had seen her when tired drop into a state of such perfect quiescence that she seemed rather like a piece of restful statuary than like a living organism; and that out in the woods, in the mountains, by the sea, or by some mountain stream, she could entertain herself with all the abandon of a child.

One of the most famous of the superintendents of our State Lunatic Asylums says: "We all know that a steam-engine, calculated to do a certain amount of work in a day, will wear out very rapidly if forced to do double that work. And as the human body is composed of a variety of the most delicately constructed organs, each designed to perform a certain amount and character of work within certain limits, and in a specified time, so every effort to compel these organs to do more work in a given time than they were designed by their Constructor to do, will speedily derange their action and give rise to disease."

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And still there comes that cry, especially from house-mothers, that there is a certain amount of work that they must do, and it is an amount which is wearing them out. The question is first to sift the work to the really needful and the fairly required, and then to know how to do in the very best time-and-labor-saving methods that which remains. For instance, when it comes to this closest question of labor-saving, when only one pair of woman's hands are ready to do a family's work, and that woman must have resting time, let her cut off scrupulously all labor that is for mere ornament, in dress and furnishings; let there be plain hems now; by-and-by these little girls will have grown up, and these boys will be old enough to help more, to bring in less mud, and to wear out less clothes, and then you can have fancy quilts, and toilettes, and pillow-shams, and aprons, and underclothes. Only try now to spare the mother to train up her children in helpfulness, kindness, courtesy, home-loving, and it will seem after all but a little while until the problem has solved itself; and to-day's little hinderers will be to-morrow's little helpers, and you can have what you now crave of pretty things, and are now by your common-sense denied. Again, these over-taxed housewives forget that there is rest to be gained in many ways: First, by change of work. Don't stand at the ironing-board until you are ready to drop, but go out on the porch, or into the sitting-room and peel the potatoes and turnips. Again, there is rest in exercise: you have sewed, and nursed baby, and washed dishes, and have not looked out-of-doors this long while; go out-of-doors, walk about your garden, or go to see your neighbor, or take a friendly look at the cows in the pasture, or at the poultry in the yard. But there is a fatigue that is not to be healed by change of work nor by walking: it needs *perfect quiet.* Don't always fancy that you can rest by changing or by out-of-door exercise. When you feel languid and weak, unattracted by out-of-doors, and when to move eyes

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or hands seems as hard as to move feet, be wise in time: *go and rest.* Smooth your hair, rinse your face and hands, take off your shoes, lie down on your bed or on a lounge in a shaded room, or recline in a big chair, and shut your eyes and your ears, and be *resolved to rest.* Do this even if it deprives the family of their dessert at dinner, or their warm biscuits for supper, or their cake for over Sunday; it will be much better for them to lack these things for a few times than to go to your funeral, or endure a six months' reign of Biddy in the kitchen. Even if, as I can hardly believe possible, some uncomprehending masculine grumbles at the lack of his wonted luxuries, never mind: people often do not understand what is for their real good

Some women wear out their vitality in doing work not fairly required of them. They, by a foolish yielding to unjust encroachments, not only shorten their own lives, but aggravate the selfishness or ignorance and future remorse of others. Thus, while there is a husband and a farm-hand or two, even a son, possibly, the housewife may be left to get her own wood, to cut or pick up her own kindling, or be expected to carry a lunch to workers in the field—this, too, when she has a family to wash, iron, cook, bake, scrub and nurse for. To submit to such demands is absurd. The ones who make them, do not realize what they are asking; to set the matter plainly before them, and positively refuse to go beyond a decent limit, would bring all things right. There is a deal of difference between firmness and quarrelling.

Another thing that is to be considered in regard to overworking and under-resting is, that as all clocks need winding, so all human brains and bodies need to be wound up by sleeping. No one ever gained a permanent advantage by depriving himself of needed sleep. Regular and abundant sleep at night is needful to maintain the health of all ages and conditions. Sleep before midnight is more refreshing than after. No one

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who is active in brain or body during his waking hours will get too much sleep. Let him sleep all he can. Don't steal sleep hours for doing little extra things which had better not be done at all. Get to bed regularly at an early hour, and do not rise earlier than you need merely to be called an early riser, a great worker, and to boast of having half your work done before your neighbors were up.

Some people not only fail to give their exhausted energies sleeping time *in* which to recuperate, but they fail to give them plenty of easily digested food *on* which to recuperate. They get too tired to eat, or they go to their meals over-exhausted, and as soon as they have swallowed a little food, for which they did not half care, they jump up from the table and go to work again. The stomach cannot assimilate the food; the veins are not filled with good blood; they have no vitality to distribute to nerves and muscles, and flesh grows flabby and pale; the nerves twitch and tremble; the muscles do not half work; the whole frame is dropping to pieces for want of what God has offered to it and foolish humanity has neglected—food and sleep!

I was discoursing somewhat in this fashion one day very energetically to my three nieces, with Mary Watkins, and Sara, and Grace Winton, who had come to tea with me.

"Still," said Mary Watkins, "granted that we rest as we can, sleep and eat as best we may, cut off the superfluous, reject the bringing of wood and drawing of water—yet, after all, we find a deal of work which we must do, work enough to make us very tired; especially with two or three or more little children on hand, poor maid or none, and churning, pickling, preserving, lard-rendering, house-work, daily and weekly cleaning, mending and making, we stand a fair chance of being over-worked and under-rested, do the best we may."

"Unless we know some very superior methods," said Hester

"Just what I positively insist on having Aunt Sophronia tell us," said Miriam.

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"Before I say anything else," I remarked, "I must impress it on you that mind and body are so closely connected, that mind can tire body out by carrying burdens even if they are only imaginary. We wear out minds and bodies by enumerating to ourselves our future toils. To-day we are ironing; and if as we iron we forecast how hard it will be in the fall to put up twenty jars of pickles and jellies, and as many more of preserves, and how very hard the fall-cleaning will be, and how weary the work at killing-time will seem, why, then, taking trouble in advance of need, and paying heavy interest for it, we exhaust ourselves. Listen to what John Newton says: 'We can easily manage if we will only take each day the burden appointed for it. But the burden will be too heavy for us if we add to it the weight of to-morrow before we are called to bear it.'"

"That suits me," said Helen, "for that is one way in which I am always tiring myself. Counting, for instance, in my mind how many clothes the children will require to have made in a year."

"Now," said Miriam, "we have laid up in our minds that good counsel, and the theory of not forecasting trouble. And now we must come to the practical part. There is work to be done: now how to do it; what method shall make the burden light? how shall we gather the rose of duty done without tearing ourselves on its thorns?"

"I do not see," I said, "but you had better, if you have any especial work in your minds, come to the point about that at once, and we will all make the best suggestions that we can. That will at least be fully practical."

"All right," spoke up Helen. "I've put a new oil-cloth on my two big halls. The last one wore out too quickly by half, and took so long to scrub that I dreaded having the chambermaid get at it. She spent all the morning on it."

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"No scrubbing," I said, "if you want a nice oil-cloth, and one to last a long while. Let it be swept with a soft broom; then on sweeping-day, after the dusting is done, tie up your broom in a bag of old flannel, and dry-wipe the oil-cloth: it can be done in a few minutes, and will make it look clean and bright. Treated in this way, it will be long before the cloth needs any washing; if it gets a spot on it, wipe it off in warm skim-milk. When it must be washed, mix a little borax and hard soap in part of a pail of warm water; rub it well with this, but use *no brush;* have ready half a pail of warm water and skimmed milk, and wipe off the oil-cloth with this and a flannel; set open the doors, and let it air-dry. Wash it as little as possible; when, after two years or so of use, it begins to look dim and wear a little, have it well washed and dried, and varnish it thoroughly: you will have to keep the hall unused for two or three days while the varnish hardens. Cared for in this way a good oil-cloth will last for years."

My auditors had all been taking notes in their pocket-note-books. When they had finished, Mary Watkins said:

"That is very satisfactory; now tell me something. This morning I spent more than an hour, and nearly scrubbed off the ends of my fingers in cleaning off some rust from my best knives, which had been put by for two or three months. Now, I want to know first, how I could have prevented the rusting? second, how to clean it off well and easily? and third, how to clean my knives?"

"First, then, the knives were possibly a little damp when put away, or were in a damp place. Before putting by your knives, they should have been well rubbed with a bit of newspaper. Then you should have laid down a piece of paper, and folded the edge of it over a knife; then another knife, laying them handle to blade with the paper covering each one. Put up each half-dozen in a separate paper. Then wrap up these papered

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knives in a piece of chamois leather or a strip of flannel, and shut them up in a paste-board box; put this in an ordinarily dry place, and your knives will never rust. Second: how to clean off rust. Wrap the rusted article in a cloth, soaked in kerosene oil, and let it be for twenty-four hours; then scour with bath-brick; rub with whiting or the old-fashioned rotten-stone; then rub with sweet oil, and after this, wash in hot suds; dry well with paper, and put by as just directed. Very deep spots of red rust can be eradicated by rubbing them with salt and vinegar. Third: how to clean your knives. Use bath-brick or a little well-powdered ashes. Have a board for the purpose, with a box of your cleaning-powder and two large corks, say an inch and a half in diameter, and two inches high: use one cork to rub the moistened powder on the knives, being careful not to bend the blade, but keep it flat to the board; then rub with the other cork and *dry* dust or powder; after this, rub the knife well with a scrap of newspaper. Many people ruin their knife-cleaning by wiping on a cloth or towel, which is sure to leave dampness or a streak of some sort. Two or three times weekly, spread your knives on a tray in the sun for an hour. Knives should be washed in clean water, and scoured as soon as washed—it spoils them to lie wet; also never throw them in a pan of hot water: that spoils alike handles and temper. Hold them by their handles while you wash the blades in warm suds; then if the handles need water, shake them through warm water, holding the knives by the blades. Keep knives in a dry box by themselves. Always have for use in the cooking, lead or iron spoons and certain forks and knives, which are not used on the table. Many people use their table-cutlery and spoons in stirring cooking and in pot-scraping, and consequently never have anything nice for the table."

"Speaking of scraping skillets and saucepans," said Miriam, "let me tell you that *shells*, a large clam or muscle shell, are

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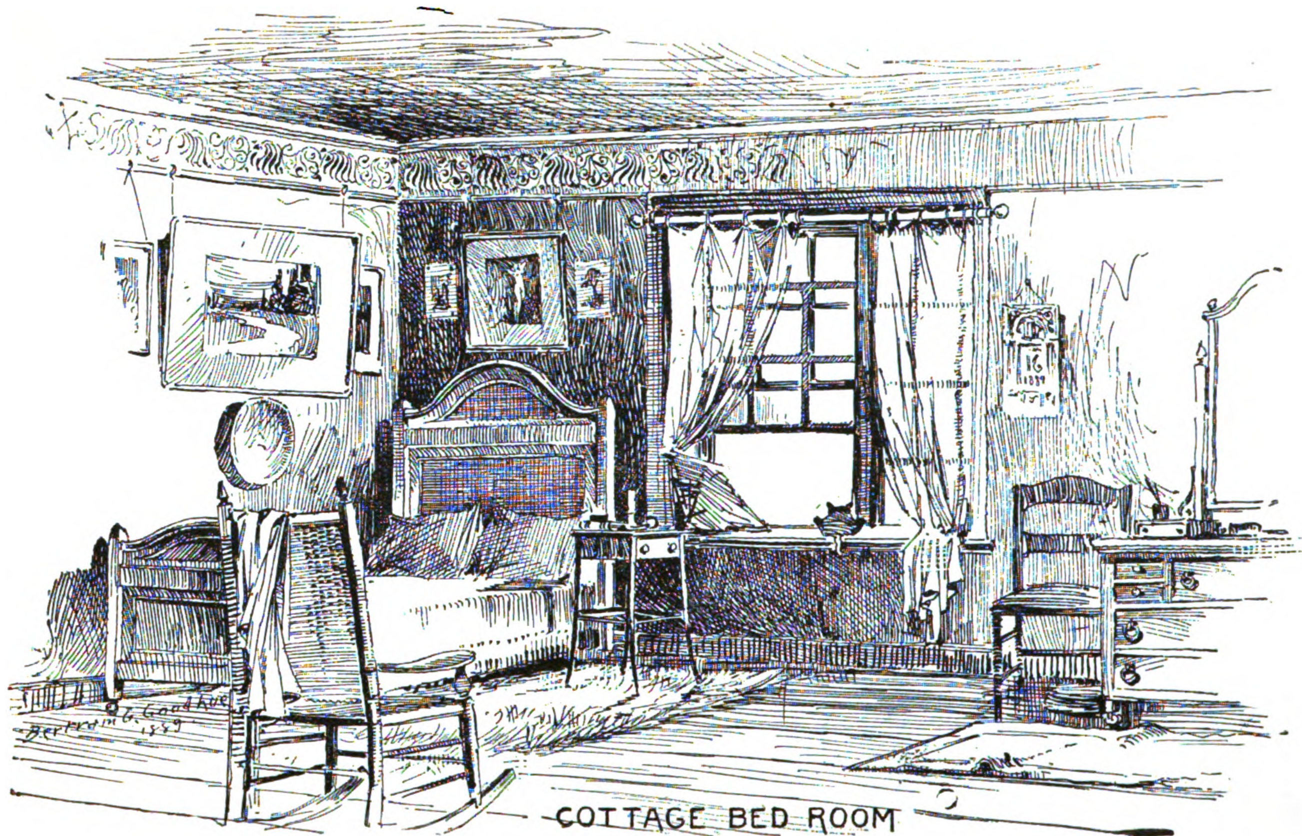

COTTAGE BED ROOM

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worth ten knives. I have some shells kept in the kitchen always for this use; they save time, and make better work of that part of the cleaning."

"Possibly," said Helen, "you can make some suggestions about cleaning tins. Every once in a while I find that our tin-cups, pails and basins look like dull lead; I say they must be scoured, and the kitchen-maid spends half a day at it, covering the table with brick-dust and ashes, getting behind-hand in the work, and losing her temper."

"This is one of the ways," I said, "in which a little daily neglect doubles our ordinary work; tins need particular care, but it takes very little time if regularly given. The tins *must not* be washed in water where greasy plates or meat-dishes have been. The common plan is to suds them out after the dishes; wipe them with a towel, and hang them up; in a week their brightness is lost. Tins *must be washed* in strong, hot suds, where no other dishes have been put; rub them hard in the suds; then shake them out; dash a little scalding water, with a cup, on them, and turn them to drain in a warm place. As soon as they are dry, take half a newspaper, and rub them vigorously outside and in: they will shine like new. About once a week, set them in the sun for an hour after they are rubbed with paper. Sedulously treated in this way, weeks or months may pass without their needing an especial scouring. When more than this cleaning which I have indicated is needed, take a flannel well sprinkled with dry whiting, and rub them hard with that, and finish off with paper. Paper is one of the best materials for cleaning that we can have in the house. Knives and tins rubbed with it preserve their brightness; if the stove is polished twice a week, and rubbed hard with paper on the other days. with ordinary care it will always look clean and bright. Paper is better than a cloth for rubbing windows and looking-glasses and table-glass"

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"As we are on the subject of cleaning," said Sara, "I might remark that people give themselves a deal of needless trouble about taking care of their silver. The silver is washed in water with other dishes, is washed perhaps in water that is half cold; then it lies for ten or fifteen minutes before it is wiped; and is wiped possibly on a damp towel. This usage keeps it always dim in its color, and it needs a weekly scouring with whiting: in this way it is nearly rubbed to pieces. The proper way to wash silver is, to wash it by itself in scalding hot suds in which nothing else has been washed; if the silver is much soiled, hold the forks, spoons and so forth by the handles, and pour a stream of clear, hot water over the soiled parts to free them; then put the silver into the clean suds; rub it well with a sponge fastened to a stick; drain it out, and without rinsing, wipe it very vigorously on a *clean towel:* it will shine as if newly polished. Once a week after the suds, drop the silver into a pan of hot water pretty strong of ammonia; wash it well in this; wipe, and then rub with paper. The silver will need no scouring, no silver-soap or whiting cleaning for a six months; will look better, and last longer."

"Thanks," said Mary Watkins; "that will save me some trouble. Now, how shall one wash iron-pots, saucepans and griddles quickly and easily? They are heavy, and take a deal of time, and are very hard on one's hands."

"It is well," I said, "to use a wooden-tub, large enough to manage them in; have plenty of hot water, and a small, thick scrubbing-brush with a high handle. Keep on hand some strong sal-soda water or some fine ashes; dip the brush into either of these, and scrub the pot inside and out. The brush protects your hands, and cleans twice as well and quickly as a cloth; rinse in hot water, and dry on the stove. Of course before putting into the tub, the inside should be scraped, if anything is adhering; and they should be rinsed, and the water

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thrown out. The practice of washing pots and pans in soiled dish water, wiping them with a wrung-out dish-cloth, and hanging them up all black and shiny within is dirty and unhealthful. *Clean iron* has a gray look."

"Nothing saves labor so much," said Sara, "as thoroughness and doing things in the right way. It is much less trouble to scour pans and pots and griddles well, than it is to half wash them; if they are not well washed, they will burn, and the next thing cooked in them is likely to stick, and cause increased labor. Some people spend three times as much time as they should on clearing off tables and washing dishes. Mother taught us very carefully how to do those things, and I never saw any house where both tasks were performed more speedily and neatly. Some people pick up their dishes, and carry them off promiscuously to sink or kitchen-table—knives, silver, glass, unscraped plates, cold meats, set down together, just as it happens: cups, platters, plates, tumblers, knives, spoons, go into the dish-pan as they are picked up; the confusion embarrasses the work, and a long time is required to get it very poorly done. We were taught, as soon as the meal was over, to put away bread, meat, butter, milk—all the eatables which were left—in their proper places, and on proper dishes. Next the salts were refilled, the caster was wiped, and these were removed. Then the knives were gathered into a tray, the forks and spoons into a deep dish, and they were carried off; then the cups and saucers were drained, piled up together, carried to the sink, or wherever they were to be washed, and set in order there. Next the glass-ware was drained and removed; then the plates and sauce-dishes were scraped and piled up. The refuse was at once carried off; the cloth shaken and folded into its box: then all our work was at the sink. We did not make ourselves work by sparing hot water: first, the glass-ware was washed, wiped and put away; then the silver was well rubbed in clean, hot suds, pol-

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ished with the clean towel kept for it, and put by. The knives were washed after the silver; were at once scoured, and laid, when rubbed with paper, in the sunshine. A fresh pan of dish-water and a pan of hot rinsing-water were provided, and cups and saucers were invariably washed *first;* next followed the sauce-plates and vegetable-dishes; then the plates, and then the meat-platters—if needful, we changed the dish-suds when we came to plates and platters. The dishes were rinsed through the clear water, and put to drain, and when all were washed, we began at those which had drained the longest, wiped them and put them in their places. The tins were washed alone, and then the cooking utensils in clean suds. Next, the dish-cloths and towels were washed in clean water, and laid in the sun, or hung up on a little frame behind the stove. The dish-pans and sink were well cleaned, the table wiped; and really it seems as if we did the work nicely in the time which I have used in describing its order."

"Dear, dear," said Helen; "if I could get Hannah to use such order, our kitchen work would be lessened by one-half."

"Write it out fairly, and hang it up over the kitchen-table," said Miriam. "I did that, and my servant improved wonderfully I told her to try it thoroughly for a month, and if it did not save her time and work she could try some other way. She tried the plan of exact order, and prized the advantage too highly to relapse into carelessness."

"I think," said Sara, "that our Grace must tell us how to sweep a room. She makes a fine art of that bit of work."

"Why, no," laughed Grace, "I only sweep and dust in a natural and proper way as any one does."

"Indeed," I replied, "there are dozens of different ways of dusting and sweeping, and some of them will be good and some very bad. Let us hear yours. Sweeping and dusting are a large part of our housework, and can be a heavy tax on time and strength."

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"Well, then," said Grace, "I begin by opening as many windows as the weather will permit. Next, I dust all chairs, stools and small furniture, and set them out in an entry or in the next room. Then I remove all books and small ornaments, dusting them as I do so, and generally putting them on some light stand which has been carried out. Then, I shake the table covers and take them away, shake the curtain folds and pin them up, and with a feather-duster brush loose dust from mantels and heavy furniture. Next, I look after cob-webs, and with a short-hand broom I brush out the dust from the corners and edges of the carpet. If there is large furniture, as bed, bureau, piano or sofa, left in the room, I cover those pieces with covers kept for the purpose, or with sheets. I pick up all large scraps, as of paper or cloth, all straws, broom-wisps or long threads, for you may sweep a carpet half to pieces trying to get these up with a broom. After this, I sweep from the sides toward the centre of the room: if you sweep toward a door, or the side of the room, there are cracks, and angles, and seams in which the dust lodges. After the dust is all swept together I use the hand-broom to collect it upon the dust-pan. Before sweeping I dip my broom in a pail of thin warm suds, and then beat out all the water from it: this is good to keep the broom from wearing, good to keep the dust from rising, and good to brighten the carpet. If a carpet is very dusty, so that the broom becomes dirty during the sweeping, it is well to wash it out when the room is half done; but a room properly cleansed every week does not become so dirty. When the sweeping is finished I dust all the wood-work with a feather-brush or a wing. Then I wipe the window-sills and around the door-handles with a sponge squeezed out of ammonia water. I dust the pictures with a feather-brush; rub the windows with a newspaper, sometimes damping it in ammonia water; then I shake out the curtains; remove the covers from the standing

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furniture and dust it; sometimes I take a very light broom tied into a cotton bag, and with it lightly wipe off the wall-paper; then I bring back the furniture and ornaments which were carried out. With such a cleaning once a week, a room only needs a little setting in order each morning to keep it nice; the curtains, carpets and furniture last at their best for a long while. If furniture is left in the room and uncovered while sweeping is going on, it gets loaded with dust; in wiping this off, much is rubbed into the furniture, giving it a dull, grimy look, and it soon fades. It is not any more trouble to clean things and set them into an adjacent room, than it is to keep moving them out of your way and then having a thick coat of dust to wipe off. If our carpets get stained or spotted, we wash the spots carefully with a flannel and ammonia water. You can make a carpet look very bright and fresh in winter by sprinkling it well with new-fallen snow and sweeping it rapidly, only there must be no fire in the room to melt the snow. To sweep the carpets now and then with coarse salt is very good to brighten them and destroy insects. But the best cleaner and freshener is a pail of ammonia water, wiping the carpet well with this and a flannel, and leaving the windows open to air and dry it for an hour; rugs and mats are much rejuvenated by such a rubbing. It is also a good plan to save tea-leaves, and with them, not too moist, to sweep dark or green carpets occasionally; they are not good for light carpets."

"You know," said Hester, "what Irving says of the good Dutch housewives of ancient New York, that they kept a parlor apparently sacred to nothing but a weekly ceremony of cleaning. Weddings, christenings and funerals were permitted to take place in this beloved apartment, but for the rest it stood closed, except for its owner's weekly visit with broom and duster. I am no advocate of shut-up rooms. I think all parts of our house should be open for the comfort and pleasure of the

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family. Still there are rooms which are used comparatively little, and for these we should not be enslaved by the Dutch housewife's idea of a weekly cleaning. They may not need to be cleaned so often, and we should not, as a mere form, encumber ourselves with needless tasks. If rooms, that are not in regular use, are sunned and aired and looked after each week, it is enough to give them a thorough cleaning when they need it. We must control our house-work, and not allow it to control us. The less is made for the greater."

"I am glad you mentioned that," said Miriam, "for I have often seen people needlessly fatiguing themselves to perform work done to suit a rule, and not to fill a need."

"Washing," said Mary Watkins, "is a great burden, and often a family bugbear; let us hear if there is any way to lighten that burden. Sara, what was your mother's wisdom about washing-day? She will be a prime authority."

Just as Sara was about to reply, Cousin Ann herself entered, and was at once requested to give us the fruits of her experience. She said that she had lately given some advice on this subject to her daughters-in-law, and she would repeat the substance of it to us. "If possible, have only one washing-day in a week; *have one* every week, for if clothes lie long soiled they are harder to wash, and wear out faster. Have, if possible, the washing-day early in the week. Remember that washing is very hard work; more young women break down their strength with washing than with any other toil: therefore, go at it *reasonably*. As it is such hard work, be sure, in the first place, and do not undertake too much other work on washing-day; have, then, as little extra work to do as possible. Don't churn and bake, and clean and wash all on one day. For this reason I should say if the young housewife does her work alone, she had much better wash on Tuesday than on Monday. You see, often over Sunday the pies and the bread come short, and will not hold out

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until Tuesday, and there is nothing on hand for dinner, and if no churning was done on Sunday there is churning for Monday, and all these duties are too much for one woman, especially when we consider that on Mondays the house needs a little extra setting in order, and generally there is a baby or small child to need attention. If the house-mother bakes, roasts, churns, nurses baby, and washes, she gets exhausted; her vitality is sapped; she is laying the foundation of disease and inviting premature death. How many such over-working mothers tell you that the baby is 'always cross on Monday!' No wonder; not only must care be hastily bestowed, but the over-heated, tired, worried, excited mother sits down to nurse the babe, and he draws poison and not health from her fevered veins; the child sleeps poorly, and cries loudly; his nerves and veins are sharing the maternal unrest; he is wakeful all night to help wear out his mother, and half the week passes before the natural tone of the outraged little system is restored.

"Now suppose on Monday the young house-mother makes tidy her house; sees that bread is prepared to last at least until Thursday; churns, gets pies or some dessert ready for next day, and roasts or boils a piece of meat also for wash-day dinner; then in the evening, if there is a press of milk, it will be better to churn again, so as not to start washing-day at the churn. Then when the babe is in bed the mother prepares the clothes for the wash. The white clothes are divided, coarse and fine; get ready for each lot a tub half-full of pretty warm water, with a large tablespoonful of soft-soap and a teaspoon of borax, or half a teaspoonful of sal-soda powder, stirred in it. Into this put the clothes to soak, pressing each piece well into the water; if any pieces are very much soiled, as, for instance, socks, or working-shirts, put them in a pail alone. In the morning take a pounder, not a large, heavy, old-fashioned affair, but one about twice as large as a potatoe-masher, and pound your fine clothes a little;

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then wring each piece out into your washing-tub of hot suds; you will be surprised to see that half the dirt is already out of your clothes, and the other half yields very easily to a little rubbing. The advantage gained in time and hard work by this soaking of the clothes is an additional reason for having the washing done on Tuesday. Clothes should not be boiled much, as it yellows and rots the fibre; often they will look as well for being put in a tub and having boiling water poured over them, lying in it until it cools, instead of being boiled in a tin boiler. After the boiling, the clothes should pass through warm, clear water before being put into a light-bluing water, as unless all soap-suds is taken out of them before the blue, they will have a dull, yellowish look. Clothes should be turned in the washing, and should be hung up wrong-side-out. If young women would only remember not to mix other work with washing; if they would not hurry too much to be 'smart about getting done;' if they would lighten the task by soaking the clothes, and by using a clothes-wringer, if they could possibly get one, and if especially they would remember that haste makes waste, and instead of straining their chests and ruining their backs by lifting whole tubs of water, or boilers of clothes, or by carrying to the line a basket heaped with wet clothes, when by lifting water by pailsful, and by carrying part of their clothes only at once, they could spare the dangerous strain, we should have fewer broken-down women."

Martha came to call us to tea.

"Oh," cried Helen, "do wait one minute until I ask Cousin Ann how to iron lace-curtains: mine must be done up."

"You do not iron them at all," said Cousin Ann; "have ready some long strips of wood—like quilting-frames—as long as your curtains. Wind them with cloth, and lay them on chairs in the sun; stretch the curtain and pin it to these frames, pulling every scallop and curve even; be careful to take new pins that will not rust."

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"Thank you; and now just one word: why did my red breakfast-cloth and napkins fade sooner than Miriam's?"

"Because, first, too much soap was rubbed on them; and, second, they were dried in the sun: colored things should be dried in the shade."

After tea, Cousin Ann was again assailed by her young friends with questions, but secured her release by promising them certain new recipes. These I obtained from Miriam's book, as follows:

The Uses of a Pan of Bread Sponge.—1. Take one pint of the sponge, add one tablespoon sugar, one tablespoon melted butter, one egg, and set it to rise for biscuits.

2. Take another pint of the sponge, one cup of molasses, three tablespoons sour milk or cream, one-half teaspoon each of soda and cream of tartar, two eggs, one nutmeg, and set it to rise for doughnuts.

3. Knead the rest of the sponge as for bread.

4. When the dough for the bread is light, cut off a piece the size of a small bowl. Make up the rest into loaves.

5. Take the piece of reserved dough and cut it up fine in a pan, add one cup brown sugar, one tablespoon of cinnamon, one cup raisins or currants, one-half cup sour milk, one spoon soda, two or three eggs well beaten, mix these into a smooth paste, and steam four hours in a buttered dish, and you have a delicious pudding.

Scrapel.—The head, knees, or part of the neck of a pig; an amount of beef from the neck or knuckle about equal in weight to the pork. Let these boil together all day. When the meat has boiled into fragments, carefully sift out all the bones, chop very fine, add salt, pepper and sweet herbs to taste. Let there be water enough to receive about half as much corn-meal as there is of meat. Set the pot back on the fire, and stir in the corn-meal until it is as thick as hasty-pudding, which will be solid

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when cold. This is a delicious breakfast dish cut in slices and fried. As it is very much thicker with meat than the ordinary scrapel, it will last good in a cold place for some time. In winter it can be kept four or five weeks. The meat must be carefully cleaned, and well skimmed while boiling.

Pressed Meat.—This a delightful relish for tea or luncheon. Take of veal, lamb, or beef, or mutton, the knuckle-pieces, with very little fat upon them. Put into cold water and let them boil for a number of hours until the meat is reduced to small bits. Skim out the bones, and chop the meat very fine; season to taste. This should have been boiled down to such consistency that when cold it will be a solid jelly, which will slice like head-cheese. This is very delicate in the spring made of veal and chicken; an old fowl, if not too fat, is better for it than a young one. In cold weather it will keep perfectly good ten days.

A Dressing for Cold Sliced Meat.—One-half cup vinegar, one teaspoon salt, one teaspoon sugar, one tablespoon mustard, one tablespoon olive oil; mix well.

Cake Cream.—Slice stale cake and put in a pudding-dish in layers with preserves or with stewed raisins. Pour over this half a cup of sweet cream well sugared, cover the top with a layer of cake, and spread on this a frosting as for cake; put in the oven for a few minutes. Serve cold.

Frosted Fruit.—Take peaches, berries, currants, or any summer fruit, and stir well through it frosting, prepared as for cake, of whites of eggs and powdered sugar; spread it on a platter and set it on ice until sent to the table.

Cranberry Cake.—Put in layers, first cranberry jelly strained and smooth, then slices of stale white cake, then custard made of the yolks of eggs, then cake, then cranberry, then cake, then a frosting made of the whites of the eggs. Serve cold with cream.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE UNITY OF THE HOME.

WHAT AUNT SOPHRONIA THINKS OF FAMILY ACCORD, DISCORD AND CONCORD.

I WISH it were written over the entrance of every Home, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." If the Home is to be durable and prosperous, there must be unity between its members. A true Home is not a boarding-house where people come and go, are glad or sorry, prosperous or unfortunate, just as it happens, for themselves alone, without affecting the other members of the household. The units, which make up the home, in a great measure stand or fall together: the prosperity of one is the prosperity of all; the disgrace of one is the disgrace of all. I have seen homes where it was assumed by the husband that his business was entirely his own business, that his wife or children were entitled to know nothing about it; he might reach profit or loss, contract or pay debts, and it was no concern of his wife or children. The wife, proceeding in the same fashion, spent or saved as she liked in her dress, housekeeping and in rearing her children. The children made their own plans, friends, engagements, bargains. The servants were sedulously kept apart from any family interests, were fixedly shown that they were hirelings with certain work to do for certain wages, and oftentimes the work was shirked or slighted, and sometimes the wages were long unpaid. Such a household is a rope of sand; the least touch of disaster breaks it asunder; its parts fly far from

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each other to meet no more. The son errs and is bidden never to cross again the parental door; the daughter, in whom little personal interest has been taken, contracts a marriage which her parents disapprove, and is ignored; the sisters and brothers drift to different cities and neglect to correspond: they grow in time to forget each other's faces; the parents are left alone in a loveless age. Here has been a Home but in seeming; it was but the false shadow of the real Home; there is nothing in this gathering of diverse tastes and aims to project itself into the future world as having in itself the deathless germ of immortality.

When by two young people a household is established, it should be clearly understood from the start that there is a community of interest; that what concerns one concerns all; that secrecies are disastrous. The man who keeps all his business relations, and prospects, and undertakings, to himself, not only, by keeping his wife a stranger to his business, loses a counsellor whose natural keenness of wit would be sharpened by personal interest in his success, a counsellor whose oneness of aim with his would be unquestionable, because not only she loves him well, but with him she must stand or fall, but he risks having one in his own home *ignorantly* working against him. If the wife is in darkness as to her husband's affairs, she may, by a too cautious saving, cause his business prosperity and stability to be undervalued; or by a too lavish expenditure, when he is in straits, she embarrasses him; or, unconscious of the pressure of his cares, she additionally burdens him with small anxieties or duties which she would, if better informed, assume herself. The wife who concludes that the health, morals, dispositions and doings of the family are no concern of the husband and father, and so leaves him uninformed of what is going on, deprives herself of aid, of the advice of one whose out-look is quite as wide and whose real interest is as deep as

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her own, and suddenly the poor father is overwhelmed by some physical or moral domestic catastrophe of which he was entirely unwarned. People go on in families each in a divided and separate way, heedless that what God has bound together in the Home, man cannot really put asunder, try as he may; and suddenly in some great shock of disaster he experiences what is thus described by a recent French writer: "Then this poor wretch knew in all its wide extent the sentiment of family responsibility, of that solidarity which causes esteem or reproach to descend from father to son, or rise from child to parent."

Where children are allowed to understand and take an interest in family affairs, where they feel that they have their partnership in the household, then they will be early enlisted as helpers; their judgment will be strengthened and developed; a proper reticence will be educated into them. It is children, who by secrecy are constantly stimulated to pry into secrets, who become tattlers; the child who is taken into honest confidence is not the blatant gossip to publish home affairs, but is the staunch home co-worker. I remember in that charming prose epic of the French Telèmaque, the young hero states that he learned to keep his own counsel, and never betray another's confidence, by having made known to him in his early childhood the cares and embarrassments of his mother Penelope. By knowing the dangers with which his home was environed he became thoughtful, brave and judicious. Parents excuse themselves from taking their children as interested partners in home affairs on the plea that they will betray confidence accidentally, or in the fervor of friendship. Pleading this, they deprive their children of training in trustworthiness, and drive them to fervid friendships with strangers by refusing the children their own confidence. Another plea is that these affairs do not concern the child. This we cannot see: the child in its physical and mental conditions must be concerned by all that affects the prosperity of the family;

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its shelter, dress, food, position, means of education, concern it just as nearly as any one. Suppose the parents explain frankly to their sons and daughters business entanglements which distress them: at once their sympathies are enlisted in retrenchments; they submit cheerfully to privations at which they might grumble if they did not understand the needs be: the sons earlier see the value of developing their energies and improving their opportunities that they may be their father's efficient helpers. What young people, if told by their parents that while freely and cheerfully accorded the means of education, yet those means were obtained by a struggle, and must be made to bring their best and speediest return, so that younger ones could have their share of advantages, would not be by far more diligent and zealous students? Some people say that it is unkind to make young folk sharers in anxieties and responsibilities; but this may be God's very way for training them for usefulness; if he sends the cares and anxieties into the family, it probably *is* his way; we deprive our children of what may be to them a fountain of strength, a reservoir of power, a ladder to ultimate success. The Scripture says, Blessed is the man who has borne the yoke in his youth.

Another point to be considered in this community of interests in a family is, that where knowledge of all business interests is confined to one—say to the father of the family—he may suddenly die, and the wife and children be utterly at a loss to know how their affairs stand, what they should do, or what plans are half carried out for them to fulfil. If, on the contrary, the father has instructed his wife and children as to his business and his plans for the future, they, instead of being at the mercy of strangers, perhaps of sharpers, can arrange for themselves on the basis of a complete understanding of their resources and prospects; the sons are not helpless idlers, but understand how to carry out their father's views.

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So also if a mother has made her daughters her companions and true yoke-fellows in the household, they know her plans, and her methods, and if she is laid aside by disease or taken away by death, they know how to hold the helm and fulfil her intentions.

The world is full of this dangerous division of interests in the family. Men sedulously conceal their prospects or losses; their wives go on in ways that once were safe, unconscious that now these ways lie along the crumbling edge of ruin; all falls in some terrible bankruptcy, and people cry: "Woman's extravagance!" where they should cry: "Man's dangerous secrecy!" God in the beginning proposed, as it was not meet for man to be alone, to make a *helpmeet* for him. If men would only be ready to make their wives *helpmeets* by confiding to them their business, consulting them, expecting to work together with them for private and public interests, then not only would fast living be far less common, but the lives of women would be less anxious, less frivolous and more useful, and commercial disasters would be far less common. Two are better than one, says the Scripture, but can two walk together unless they be agreed? Who more likely to be Argus-eyed to business dangers, who more likely to be resolute and courageous, than the woman who knows not only her own comfort and happiness to be at stake, but her husband's honor, and perhaps life, and her children's future?

"Ah," said a great criminal recently, "all my affairs would have gone on better, and this terrible denouement would never have occurred, if I had told my wife and children all my entanglements; they would have saved me from myself. I could not have become a criminal with their honest eyes fixed upon me."

I found lately this paragraph in a paper:

"It is very common to hear the remark made of a young man

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that he is so industrious and so economical that he is sure to be thrifty and prosperous. And this may be very true of him so long as he remains single. But what will his habitual prudence avail him against the careless waste and extravagance of an uncalculating, unthinking wife? He might as well be doomed to spend his strength and life in attempting to catch water in a sieve. The effort would be hardly less certainly in vain. Habits of economy, the ways to turn everything in the household affairs to the best account—these are among the things which every mother should teach her daughters. Without such instructions, those who are poor will never become rich, while those who are now rich may become poor."

Now this is all very true, but if during five or ten years the young man desires his wife to maintain a certain style of living, and then his income narrowing, does not explain matters to her, and ask her to retrench, who is to blame for the too lavish expenditure? Wives are as ready to save as husbands to gain, if they only are allowed as clearly to understand a "needs be." To my mind this concealment in domestic life is criminal. The marriage partnership is as sacred as any partnership; but what kind of business fealty would it be, to take a partner, and conceal from him a mass of bad debts, risky speculations and dangerous entanglements? "With all my worldly goods I thee endow," says the groom, in the marriage-service. Now, if these worldly goods are at present nothing at all but a figure of speech, and he and she so understand it, and bravely expect to create the goods by their joint industry, well and good; but it is *not* well and good, when the worldly goods are expressed by a series of debts of which the bride has been told nothing, while she must feel their burden. Unhappy the new-made household which starts having, as the French say, "its debts for its savings."

Probably no right-minded woman ever without indignation

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read in "Stepping Heavenward" the atrocious conduct of the Doctor, who amiably introduces into his family two perpetual inmates, without ever consulting his wife; assumes debts for her to help carry; and when she has staggered on year after year, burdened thereby, forgets to tell her that they are paid until six months after the happy event! One would say that such a man was very far from the divine idea of the home, and making very poor progress in the Heavenward Way. Suppose a wife had thus invited guests, assumed debts, and forgotten to state when the scrimping and toiling to carry the burden might end? But is not this a partnership of equal interests? Shall not these two stand or fall together? Is not the loss or prosperity of one the loss or prosperity of both?

But I am far from thinking that these selfish deceits and withholdings are all on the masculine side of the question. I once knew a young man who was engaged to a girl who had ten thousand dollars. She, in apparently the frankest manner, agreed that he should make arrangements to invest this in a particular way for their mutual advantage, and as soon as they were married the money was to be forthcoming. The trustful youth accordingly entered into business engagements which he could not cancel. The marriage over, the bride's uncle paid her the ten thousand; but before one penny of it could be used as proposed, *seven thousand dollars* were called for to pay the lady's debts—debts of foolish extravagance, for lace, jewelry, flowers, confections, mantua-makers and similar demands; thus the poor husband, miserably entangled by his business arrangements, struggled in debt for ten years, until his health was nearly ruined, and his youth was quite lost. I remember that a year or two ago, Miriam and I spent a week in the city at the boarding-house of an old acquaintance. Entering her room one day, and seeing a large number of parcels on the bed, Miriam said:

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"Oh, Mrs. Graham, you have been out shopping?"

"No," said Mrs. Graham, "those belong to Mrs. Lester. They are to lie here until Mr. Lester has gone out; you know ladies do not always care to have their husbands know every little thing that they may purchase."

Miriam looked confounded; a flush of indignation rose over her face. "No," she said, clearly, "I do *not* know any such thing! I am sure I should not stoop to conceal anything which I bought or did; and if I thought my husband would in the least question the propriety of a purchase, I would not make it."

"Oh, well," said our hostess, a little embarrassed, "you and Mr. Rogers are different from the most of people."

"Indeed, I hope not in this particular," said Miriam.

It is true that I have not myself had the experience of married life, but I have studied married life closely in many homes, and I think I have good grounds for certain opinions which I have formed concerning it. The reference just made to a popular book, and to the Doctor bringing home two permanent members for the family, calls to my mind one point where unity in homes is often disastrously lacking: I mean in reference to relations by marriage. Why are certain women another woman's natural enemies, merely because the words "in-law" are added to the terms sister and mother? I have heard enough of the remark that one marries a man or a woman, but *not* their family. Now marriage is not an example in subtraction but in addition. It is not to destroy past ties and natural affections, but to add new ties and new affections. That a man takes a wife is not a reason for dissevering him from the sister who is of his own blood, who was his childhood's companion, pet or mentor. Marriage is not a Lethe in which are to be lost the memory of childhood, gratitude for past favors, and the fifth commandment. True, the Bible does say that a man is to leave father and

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mother and cleave to his wife, though in this age it is usually the wife who is required to do the leaving, often not seeing her early home and friends for a decade. The husband and wife are declared to be one flesh; but the making of the new tie does not sunder the old: it is not that, loving one more, we are to love others less. The very fact that husband and wife become one flesh should serve to draw them in tender and forbearing unity to the close kin of the one to whom they are so near. We must learn to put ourselves in other people's places. As we measure to others shall inevitably be measured to us. Time is a singularly exact avenger—the true avenger of blood, ever with fleet foot and uplifted arm following the evil-doer with his exactions, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life. Think then, mother, so jealous, so easily offended, so hardly to be won by your mother-in-law, this babe on your knee shall take a wife, and how would *you* like to be viewed as a mother-in-law? Would you have your cares, your toils, your long devotion ignored? We have no right to expect the families into which we marry to be so much better than our own that they have no faults. The days are gone by when the sons of God wedded with the daughters of men. Doubtless there will be more points of difference between us and them than between us and our own families; but to be unlike ourselves is not necessarily a crime. I think there is less common-sense showed about relatives by marriage than about any other subject. A mother-in-law is astounded at seeing imperfections in her son's wife. Pray, are her own daughters perfect, or is her son an angel? If not, the new daughter would be poorly placed among them if she were perfect; and—there is nothing more efficacious in curing imperfections—than good example! The sisters must not be jealous because their brother holds his bride dearer than themselves, for they expect when they marry to love husband better than brother; nor must the wife desire her husband to love his sisters

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less than before, for when her own toddling boy and girl are grown, will she desire the love-bands between them to be rudely broken? Why must a young man be instructed that his mother-in-law is his natural enemy? If she loves his wife, and is solicitous for her welfare, she loves and guards what is his dearest treasure, and thus has a claim to his gratitude, as in that wife's well-being is freighted the happiness of his home. If there are some of her ways which are not pleasing to him, very likely that account is squared without any effort of his own by some of his ways being unpleasant to her. Has she not loved and nourished the being dearest to him? If the daughter is charming, does she not probably owe it to her mother? Must not that be a praiseworthy woman who has raised up for him so good a wife? If he is a true husband, does he not owe his wife's filial love some sympathy? Why must a wife's mother and a husband's mother be foes? Are not their interests centred in one household? Has not each made a sacrifice for the other's child? Will there not be a line of grandchildren in whom they will be mutually interested?

I have seen households where the mother was carping at the father's relatives and the father was condemning the mother's kindred, stirring up in the breasts of the children distrust and hatred of those who were equally their kin; forgetting that these to whom they made the children hostile were those whom God had bound to them by blood; that their strife would introduce an element of lovelessness into their own homes; that they were weakening the bonds that tied their own children each to each. I never yet knew a case where, by coldness, quarrelling, censoriousness, the parents lessened their children's love for relatives on either or both sides of the house, that the evil did not rebound by having the children grow up loveless between themselves, jealous, captious, assigning evil intentions to trifling acts, and ending by drifting widely apart. The old Arab proverb

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says, "Curses, like chickens, go home to roost," and the curse of family dissensions never fails to get home to roost. Parents should think of this when they are carping at every little oddity and folly in their relations by marriage, so their children will carp at and vex each other. Suppose, my good young woman, that your mother-in-law finds some fault with your style of doing things. Perhaps you are to blame in having withdrawn confidence from her, and not explained *why* you did thus; or, as she has twice as long experience as you, possibly her way is better than yours, so you will do well to try it; or, granted that she is fretful and exacting, behold the root of the same in her passionate mother-loving of your husband. Did you forget that the tie between him and her is just as close as between you and the babe you are nursing at your breast, and even stronger, because it has had years in which it was annealed in love and care and service? You, busy young head of a family, are angry, because your wife's mother criticised your business or family doings? What impelled her, but desire for your family prosperity and happiness, and the future fortune of your children?

It is dangerous and disadvantageous, people say, for families to live together: let each household be alone. Doubtless the rule is good, but Providence sometimes interferes with it. It would be well if every man could provide for his own, and if all ate the bread which they earned; but many cannot do this, and the poor we have always with us, and by this alteration of the normal order of earning and providing, we may exercise the grace of Christian charity. Thus, when it is needful in God's providential arrangings for us, that families should live together—that the part of one family should find refuge in another—this may be a means of developing new graces in ourselves and our children. Therefore, people should not complain, and look on it as a great evil, that aged, poor, infirm or homeless relatives must be received into their families; but rather feel thankful

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that they may repay past debts of love and tenderness. The Apostle John doubtless received into his house, as a great blessing and favor, the mother of our Lord; and Christ himself just as surely sends now his servants as inmates of other homes, as then he sent Mary to John. What should be more grateful to the feelings of every true heart than to be able to establish in one's home, and wait upon with affection and respect, an aged parent? What finer opportunity could offer of teaching to children filial piety, respect for the aged, self-control and unselfishness, besides laying up a store of regard and attention to be enjoyed in our own old age, for as we sow we shall reap. I remember a very pretty fragment on this subject which runs thus:

"Our mother, who now lies in death before us, was a stranger to me, as are all of these her descendants. All I know of her is what her son has told me to-day: that she was brought to this town from afar, sixty-nine years ago, a happy bride; that here she has passed most of her life, toiling, as only mothers ever have strength to toil, until she has reared a large family of sons and daughters; that she left her home here, clad in the weeds of widowhood, to dwell among her children, till health and strength left her. God forbid that conscience should accuse any of you of ingratitude or murmuring on account of the care she has been to you of late. When you go back to your homes, be careful of your example before your own children; for the fruit of your own doing you will surely reap from them when you yourselves totter on the brink of the grave. I entreat you as a friend, as one who has himself entered the evening of life, that you may never say in the presence of your families nor of heaven: 'Our mother has outlived her usefulness; she was a burden to us.' Never, never! A mother can never live so long as that! No; when she can no longer labor for her children, nor yet care for herself, she can fall like a precious weight on their bosoms, and

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call forth by her helplessness all the noble, generous feelings of their hearts."

There are no more beautiful and more richly repaying lessons to be taught our children than those contained in the Scripture: to rise up before the aged, and to honor the face of old men, and to see in the hoary head a crown of glory. Life with all its burdens and its bitterness lies behind the old, and we should make their age a time of peace. There is but a short space left them wherein we can show gratitude, tenderness, and that sympathy for infirmity which becomes all of us who are moving on toward like age and infirmity.

Mrs. Winton's aged and paralyzed mother lived with her for several years—indeed, until her death. Being quite helpless Mrs. Winton fed her. One day while she was thus giving her her dinner I was there, and being a little tired and nervous, Mrs. Winton spilled some of the beef-tea. I said to her, with a smile: "How much more skilfully she fed you when you were little!" Mrs. Winton has since told me that those words never left her; that during wakeful nights, and days of ceaseless watching, during the feeding, bathing and dressing needful, came to her the constant thought, "How skilfully and tenderly she did this for you when you were little!" She prized and taught her children to prize this opportunity of ministering, not only to a revered and beloved parent, but to a saint of God on the verge of paradise.

I have often heard people speak as if where there was a mingling of households, and of diverse elements in a family, there must be discord and jarring. This is a dangerous feeling, for where we expect discord we are likely to have discord. I was myself a member of a large family. My mother, a widow with children, married a widower with children; children were also born to this second marriage; my mother's mother and my step-father's sister also belonged to the family circle; but

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in all this large assemblage of different elements there was no discord nor jarring. We were taught to seek for the virtues and not the failings of those about us; to be grateful for favors, and ready to grant them; to put ourselves in other people's places; to respect other people's rights; to feel honored by opportunities of waiting on the old and helpless. I am sure I hardly knew whether the full brothers and sisters, or the half sisters, or those who were such only in name, had the higher share in my regard; and this experience has shown me that family unity can be attained anywhere and in any circumstances, if people will only unselfishly resolve to have it.

A dear friend of mine, when almost in middle life, married a widower with a family of half-grown children, with whom the first wife's mother was living. The family not only recognized their father's right to choose a wife for himself, but were rejoiced that his happiness was to be added to in the choice of a lady, in age, education, position and piety, so well fitted to grace his home. The wedding over, the children with simple sincerity welcomed the bride to a mother's place in their hearts and home, and the aged grandmother folded her in her arms as a true daughter. The record of the years of this family life was thus told by the second mother: "No own children could ever have been dearer or more loving to a parent than these were to me, and it was a true blessing from heaven to live in the house with that dear old lady. It seemed when she died that I *could not* live without her."

From such instances we see that unity does not rise from nearness of relationship, nor from smallness of families, but from a right direction of the heart. As quarrelsome families as I ever saw were small families, where none but parents and one set of children lived. If parents show partiality among their children—if they always give up to the one who makes the loudest noise or tells the most angry tales—if they do not cul-

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tivate strict justice and loving-kindness among their children—if the mother is always showing up the faults of the father's relations, and the father devotes himself to complaining of the mother's relatives, while the kindred on both sides strive to make the children their partisans, no matter how small the family may be, it will be large enough for disunion; as says the Scripture, they will be divided two against three, and three against two.

I think the three classes of relations most abused have been mothers-in-law, maiden aunts and step-mothers. If all maiden aunts fared as well as I have, they would have very little of which to complain, for I have yet to receive an unpleasant act, word or look from my large family of relations. Often because a person is a maiden aunt she is therefore supposed to be a legitimate subject of sneers or censure, whereas her position ought to make her a public benefactor. If she bestows advice, she is old-fashioned, too particular and censorious. If she gives no advice, but drifts with the present current of affairs, then she is foolish, giddy, trying to be girlish. Whittier describes the maiden aunt as she might and should be anywhere, and as I have no doubt she always would be if properly received:

> "Who lonely, homeless, none the less
> Found peace in love's unselfishness,
> And welcomed wheresoe'er she went.
> A calm and gracious element,
> Whose presence seemed the sweet income
> And womanly atmosphere of home."

However, maiden aunts are generally independent. If they have no private means they are able to take care of themselves, and, if needful, they can make their own place in the world. With the step-mother it is different; once married, she must abide in the state wherein she finds herself, even though a meddlesome neighborhood excite against her the children's hearts which she desires to win, and though relatives on both

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sides of the house league against her, as if in virtue of her arduous position she were the common enemy. Probably there are very foolish, weak, harsh or indifferent step-mothers, because there are foolish, weak, harsh and indifferent own mothers. If there is a selfish or silly streak in the nature, it is likely to come out either in the own mother or the step-mother, but not as I can see more in one than in the other. The own mother may feel more passion of love, the step-mother more the grave bonds of duty, but whether the spring is the one emotion or the other, the result is an honest seeking of the best good of the family.

It is taken as a popular statement of fact, usually given in a martyr-like tone, "Well, you know, there is a great difference between own mothers and step-mothers." Yes, I *do* know that there is, and sometimes the difference is in favor of the step-mother. I have seen a good many step-mothers, and I never yet saw one who was not doing the very best that was possible for her husband and his family. The person of all that I knew who talked the loudest against step-mothers, and the miseries which she had suffered from one, when pressed to the point, could lay no fault to the unhappy woman's charge, except that she had married her father. I said to her: "Well, if that was a crime, your own mother was guilty of the same. To hear you arraign step-mothers one would think you had been cruelly used, but that is impossible, since you were eighteen years old and largely and powerfully made, before you had any step-mother. I fancy, if one heard her side of the story, we should learn something of the painful prejudice which exists in the minds of step-daughters." How absurd this family quarrelling is! How cruel to greet a woman's entrance to a new home with a bitter feeling, and acting as if her position were usurped and her nuptials only half legal!

A cousin of mine, a good girl too, was deeply aggrieved that

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her father took a second wife—a lady suitable to him in every way. I said to her: "Rhoda, you expected to be married, your brother is in California, your father is of a long-lived race: why should the poor man face his age alone?"

Rhoda could give no suitable reason for her pique, but she *would* speak of the new wife as "my father's companion," until my patience was exhausted, and I spoke out: "If you don't choose to say 'mother,' no one will complain, though in declining the word you lack a very attractive grace; but I am quite tired of 'my father's *companion*,' as if she were a hired servant, or living in illegal bonds. She is your father's *wife* as much as your own mother was, and you insult all three, father, mother, and step-mother, by this ridiculous phrase."

Rhoda did not use the objectionable term any more, but she gradually stopped corresponding with me. I suppose she did not like my speaking my thoughts so clearly, but it is a great comfort frankly to free one's mind.

How often have I seen step-mothers who were the very making of their families, bringing the children morally, mentally and socially to something better than had ever been expected for them. And this is heroic, when we consider against what difficulties and prejudices they have often to struggle. The restrictions and reproofs which would be cited as a mark of an own mother's judiciousness are called tyranny in a step-mother.

I visited once the children of an early friend and schoolmate. This lady, dying suddenly, left a large family, which at the end of a year passed into the hands of a step-mother. Some six or eight years after this marriage I visited the family. The excellent judgment, principle and management of this second mother left nothing to be desired. Her life had been one of devotion to her step-children, which found itself well repaid in their remarkable advancement in life. And yet, surrounded by friends, luxuries and gratifications purchased by the step-

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mother's money and abilities, one of the daughters said to me, with a sigh: "And yet, of course, there is *so* much to put up with, for you know a step-mother is different from an own mother."

"Yes," I replied, "and sometimes the difference is in the favor of the step-mother. Your own mother was a charming person, of high family and much genius. However, she married far too young—before her education was completed, and she was always a martyr to ill health. Her inexperience and feebleness of constitution, together with an unusually yielding disposition, rendered her quite unable to exercise that decision, that activity and ability which your father's business entanglements and large family demanded. She could not have done for this family what her successor has done. I know that your step-mother's achievements for you have surpassed your own mother's best dreams, and that she herself would have asked nothing better than to see you in the hands of such a wise, kind and capable guardian."

I wish the public would come to see that this prejudice against step-mothers is weak, foolish and unfounded, unworthy of an age of Christian common-sense. People should stand or fall, be condemned or praised, on their own proved merits or demerits, not upon the strength of a name.

I have talked a great deal with my nieces on the need of Unity in the Home. Disunion in families is a sort of lineal inheritance; it runs down from generation to generation, like the *chin* of the house of Hapsburg. We should try to make our homes calm and united, that Unity may bless the homes of our descendants to the third and fourth generation. How shall this Unity be encouraged? By example; by precept; by practice. Children should see that their parents show this lovingness and forbearance to each other, and to their relatives in very virtue of the tie of relationship. They should be taught

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that the tie of brother or sister gives a claim upon their patience and kindness, and not liberty to be captious and exacting. Very small children can be taught to be tender and loving in their ways to each other, and to recognize the claim of little brother or sister. Children should not be allowed to quarrel, to strike, or tattle. Very little children often show their fallen dispositions, and will tell tales, or even make up tales to get another child into trouble. People sometimes think a child will have sense to defend itself from a false accusation, but this is not always the case; some children think slowly, are easily alarmed, and have a certain reticence in rebutting charges, so that often the loudest and seemingly most innocent complainant is the real culprit in a household. It is dangerous for parents to be taking sides between their children, for thus doing they leave thorns of injustice to rankle, and thus weaken the bonds of love. The danger of allowing children to go on quarrelling, and squabble out their difficulties, is still greater: for the longer that they quarrel the frailer become the love ties between them. The best way is to condemn the quarrel as a thing evil in itself; to exalt the beauty of self-sacrifice and forgiveness, and to change the current of the combatants' thoughts and feelings by some new occupation or some pleasure.

I was at Miriam's once when her three children seemed in a very uncomfortable frame of mind, and in a loud dispute and accusation ran to their mother.

"Dear me," said Miriam, "you all seem to be right, and all to be wrong, and you certainly are very hot and tired, and have played too long. Run, put away your hats and wash your faces, and come and see what a nice thing I have for each of you."

In their wonder over the "nice thing" the squabble ended, they returned in peace, and Miriam gave Dora three fine sugar-plums to distribute. These eaten amicably, she said: "Now you must go to work;" and set Dora to hemming a towel, Bob

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to ripping an old waist, and little Harold to cleaning up the shoe closet. We heard no more of the fray which, in charges of "names," "stories," "faces" and "blows," had seemed likely to be a serious affair.

"So," I said, laughing, to Miriam, "they get candy for quarrelling!"

"Anything is better than a long quarrel, temptation to false statements, and probable injustice in settlement. They seldom quarrel, for it always stops the play for the time being, though I try to stop it as agreeably as possible."

Cousin Ann has always been particular to foster affection in her family. She was talking to me of this lately, and she said: "There is nothing which more promotes unity in the family than the keeping of little family festivals. I always kept all the birthdays. We looked forward to the birthday keeping. The children prepared their little gifts; I made the birthday cake, which the hero of the occasion cut and distributed. Sometimes we kept the festival at home, sometimes we went on a picnic or a trip to town. The one whose birthday it was chose, and the choice must be for a treat in which all the family could share. We sometimes invited strangers, and sometimes kept the festival by ourselves, for I did not wish my children to feel that they could not be happy within the circle of their own family. But we recognized the social instinct as a part of our nature conferred by God for wise ends, and we did not cry out against a desire for other companions and friends than those of our own fireside as if it were a crime. Now that my three elder children are married and away from home, we keep their birthdays still as a family-gathering, and they come home with their households, as they are settled near me. If they were far away I should send them gifts and greetings, for I never want the ties between us to weaken so long as we all shall live. As we kept the children's birthdays, so Reuben's and mine were kept; and

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every such occasion, with its good-will, good wishes and little offerings, served to draw us closer to each other. We also kept the yearly holidays together, in a way to please all. Christmas was looked forward to. The children saved their money, and taxed their inventive powers, and their industry, in the preparation of gifts. We often gave them presents—as a set of books, a game or a puzzle—which belonged to all, so that common rights and common property should exercise their honesty and self-sacrifice. Thanksgiving was another festival especially a Home festival, when we thanked God for graciousness to us as a household, for blessings on household labors, and for increasing our common store. We taught our children to have an interest in each other's preferences, and if they had rivalries that they should be generous ones, and without jealousy. If one child enjoyed flowers and gardening, all were interested in procuring seeds, bulbs, roots, or new information in horticulture. Where another was fond of fowls or stock, all were alert to hear of or obtain fresh varieties. Thus the very diversities of tastes in the family were incentives to kind acts and bonds of new affection. I have heard people say that their children were so unlike in tastes and dispositions, that they could not expect them to be companionable to each other; but I found that, ruled by love, these differences of taste and opinion only increased their mutual happiness in each other, giving a freshness to their intercourse, and a breadth to their thoughts."

"Yes," said Hester, who was sitting with us; "Jean Ingelow has put that thought into very beautiful verse, thus:

"'As heaven's high twins, whereof in Tyrian blue,
The one revolveth: through his course immense
Might love his brother of the damask hue,
For like and difference.

"'For different pathways evermore decreed,
To intersect, but not to interfere;
For common goal, two aspects and one speed,
One centre, and one year;

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THE MASTER PAINTER—THE LITTLE MAN THINKS HE KNOWS IT ALL.

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"'For deep affinities, for drawings strong,
That by their nature each must needs exert;
For loved alliance, and for union long
That stands before desert.'"

"I remember that," said Cousin Ann; "it is very beautiful. I think in that same poem is the line: 'For human love makes aliens near of kin.' If human love can do that for aliens, what can it not do for those of our own blood? The ties of blood are, we say, of nature; but use and cultivation must make them strong, or they shall drop asunder like burned tow. It rests with parents to make their children true yoke-fellows and friends, staunch to each other's interests, dearest friends and best helpers in adversity; or whether, in youth left to slip farther and farther apart, knowing no mutual interests, sympathies, affections, they shall in time drift from the home, like dead leaves from the tree in Autumn, never to know or care more for each other. How much better the home where each child indissolubly held in loving affiliation shall, like the shoots of the banyan, but reach out to take fresh root, and growing each in its place, increase the strength and stately beauty of the whole."

"The Scripture tells us," I said, "that a brother is born for adversity, but many parents seem to forget that these family relationships were provided by God to be comfort, defence and strength to us in all the days of our lives, and fail in childhood to weld the bonds of kin."

"Some parents of my acquaintance," said Cousin Ann, "think that I am very hard on them in holding them responsible for the characters of their children, and for all that occurs in their families; still, I do hold that if there is evil in the house, the springs of it will be found in some evil of commission or omission in the parents. The parental error may have its excuses and its ameliorations in the fact that their parents before them erred, and failed to instil right views and set a right example, wrong descends from generation to generation, and we cannot

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too clearly impress on parents' minds the sense of their responsibility. I have noticed that where there has been in one generation excessive severity, in the next there is likely to be lawlessness, and likewise the rebound from lawlessness is severity. In this matter of lack of unity and home affections, the evil seems not to rebound into sentimentality, or passionate loving, but coldly to run on from generation to generation in its own kind. Some families are remarkable for their strong affections; others for their indifference to their kindred. Parents should feel that lovingness, like other good growths, needs to be cultivated, and it is their duty to take every measure to make it thrive in the garden of their children's hearts. Visits between different members of the family should be exchanged; presents should be sent; no matter how busy the life is, correspondence should be kept up. Some husbands ignore the fact that, when a right-minded woman marries, she does *not* forget her own kindred and her father's house, but retains love for her parents, brothers and sisters, and this love should be respected; at whatever sacrifice, intercourse should be maintained; years should not be allowed to pass when the wife sees no face that surrounded her childhood. So, on the other hand, the wife should delight to invite to her home her husband's parents and brothers and sisters, making them the friends of her children and cementing the natural bonds of the family. It is a grand misfortune when, by uncontrollable circumstances, an individual or a family are forced to dwell alone, isolated, as some tropic palm transplanted to a foreign climate. Think how time and distance were unable to sever the strong ties between pilgrim Abraham and his father's house; and after seventy years of absence he sends back to his native land to secure a wife for his son, confident that his kindred there have not lost their loving interest in him, and will not say him nay."

Among the other means which Cousin Ann takes to establish

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the unity of her family is that of keeping the wedding days. Her children inherit the custom, and each of them celebrates their own marriage anniversary in his own house, and they all go back to the homestead to commemorate the beginning of their family life, in the marriage of Cousin Reuben and Ann. Generally other relations beyond the immediate family are invited, sometimes more, and sometimes less. There was a large gathering on the thirtieth anniversary, and all of the immediate relatives were present, as well as especial friends from the neighborhood, the daughters-in-law's families, the minister and his family, and relations of Cousin Reuben from a distance. That farm-house seems elastic in its power of accommodating people. The children who are at home had improvised rooms for themselves in the attic; the servants took possession of the rooms which in July and August belong to the pensioners from the city; the whole house was in festal attire. Sara had been at home for several days helping in the preparations, and Martha had been there with me, also lending her aid.

It was in June; the farm was in such order, and showing such a splendid prospect of crops, that one might have supposed it especially prepared to contend for a county prize; that the beautiful acres which framed it on either side belonged to the two elder sons, did not make the prospect less pleasing; the large, comfortable, unostentatious farm-house, draped in vines, surrounded with fine gardens, blooming shrubbery and fragrant grape-arbors, appeared to have a vitality of its own, and to be able to rejoice in the joy of this large family, which had grown up in its shelter, and returned there constantly to give token of their love and happiness. The six little grandchildren frolicked around, so evidently to the admiration of the grandparents, that I asked Cousin Ann, in all seriousness, which was more satisfactory, the child, or the grandchild? and she replied that she "could not tell: both had their advantages."

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Friendship, frankness, generosity everywhere abounded. At sunset many of the young people were in the parlor singing, while Sara played; the children, in perfect concord, enjoyed a game; along the garden walks paced white-haired Cousin Reuben and his whiter-haired elder brother arm-in-arm. Cousin Ann, her sister-in-law, and three nieces were conversing on the front piazza; the minister was sitting by me in one of the arbors, and glancing, well pleased, on the whole picture, he exclaimed: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; like the dew of Hermon, and the dew which descended on the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded his blessing, even life forever more."

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF MONEY IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA TELLS HOW TO CONDUCT DOMESTIC EXPENDITURES.

I WAS quite amused lately by an argument which I heard between two of Mr. Carr's boys. They were sitting close by my fence, where a large willow casts its shade on the side-walk. The subject of their discussion was *money*. One of the boys said it was the root of all evil—that his Sunday-school lesson had given it that bad pre-eminence; he also supported this position by facts, as that money caused quarrelling, and bought whiskey. The other boy maintained that money was a good; that it bought us all the nice things which we had; that people were more respected for possessing it; that nations who had money were civilized, and had all manner of improvements, and only barbarians did not possess it. About at this stage of the argument they decided to lay the case before some umpire, and looking up they saw me. Accordingly they came near my window, and the elder boy said that the "big fellows" in his school had a society, and were about to debate the question whether money or woman had had the greater influence over men; he and his brother on hearing the question had found that they differed greatly as to the merits of money.

"I think," I said, "that you have, both of you, right views, but they are not clearly before your minds. You say, Joe, that your lesson declares money to be the root of all evil

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There you mistake: it says the *love* of money is the root of all evil. Money is not to be prized as an end, but as a means: it is not valuable for what it is, but for what it will procure. We have no right to love money in itself. Misers love money; they hoard it; it does them no good; they prevent, in their hoarding, the good which it might do in circulation; money is not to them a means of doing or getting good, but it is the end of their desires. We may also love money unlawfully as a means, when the end which we desire to obtain by it will be selfish or wrong. If we crave it to surround ourselves with luxuries, refusing hospitality, charity and help to others, then we love money or its equivalent, and it is a root of evil to us. The love of money is the root of all evil, because it tempts men to break all the Commandments: they worship money instead of God, and so break the first and second Commandments; for money, men have sworn falsely; have perjured themselves, and so have used in vain God's holy name. To increase their property, men labor on the Sabbath; for love of money, people have refused to help their old or sick parents, to give fair wages to workers, to aid the poor, and to bestow charities; and in these ways have broken the fifth Commandment. You boys have doubtless read and heard of plenty of instances where people have stolen, lied, murdered, coveted, for love of money, and the love of money has caused them thus to break those two great Commandments—to love God and our neighbor—which Christ said included all the law and the prophets. Thus you understand that the *love* of money is the root of all evil. Therefore, we must not love money, but the good which we may do with it.

"On the other hand, Samuel, you are right in claiming that money is needful and useful, and that by it immense good is accomplished. Great geniuses have invented, but moneyed men have put the inventions into practical, active use. Money has printed our books, established hospitals, endowed colleges,

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turned swamps into grand cities, deserts into farms, forest-wilds into valuable town-lots. Money has sent out missionaries, has multiplied Bibles, has encouraged discoveries and inventions: it is a bond between nations, produces commerce, maintains railroads, pushes on the world in all its civilizations and advancements. The Bible bids us be diligent in business; says if a man will not work, he shall not eat; promises wealth as a reward of honest toil; so money honestly earned, used for good objects, not engrossing our souls from good things, but used to promote good, is a good thing to have, and we should receive it as a gift of God. So you see the good or the evil lies not in the money itself, which is merely a bit of metal fixed upon as a medium of exchange, but the good or evil lies in our own hearts, in our method of using or abusing it."

Now, when the boys had run off, I sat thinking about this question of money and its influence. What a power it is in the world! If in the world at large, then in the home, which is the world in miniature, and the root of public and national life. How do people in their homes regard money? What is the manner of its Use? what the fashion of its Abuse? I said to myself, money lies behind all our bread, our clothes, our shelter, our education—every man gets it and spends it; at some point all his toil means money; at some point all his relaxation reduces itself to money. I will this very day get out my journals, wherein I have noted for so many years all that I have seen and thought of Homes, and I will see how money is making or marring in domestic life.

Every year money becomes a larger and larger factor in the problems of human existence. It was once the fashion to express a lofty disdain of money, to condemn its importance; but this disdain exists *only* in theory. It is idle to quarrel with facts, and our contempt of wealth does not extend beyond the hour when we can get it in possession. While very lofty virtues

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have flourished in the midst of destitution, we must not consider that they are the legitimate products of destitution, but have thriven in spite of it, and shone all the more splendidly from the unfriendly nature of their surroundings. The possession of money not only opens to a man many new avenues of doing good, but it closes upon him the door of many temptations. If we examine even those errors to which money is supposed to render a man especially liable, we shall find that they consort equally with a desperate poverty. In proportion to their numbers, there are more debauched beggars than millionnaires, more criminals among the very poor than among the very rich. Extravagance, the living beyond one's means, and lightly dissipating our money, whether it be more or less, belongs as much to the poor as to the rich—indeed, no class so readily squander their earnings as those who have gained them with very great difficulty. Gluttony and drinking are supposed to be of the crimes into which the very rich are betrayed, but even when the proportion of numbers is adjusted carefully, there is more indulgence in these faults among the moneyless than the moneyed. The prayer of Agur covers the case: "Give me neither poverty nor riches: lest I be full and deny thee; lest I be poor and steal." Here each state has its danger, and the sin of the rich is more likely to be covert, of the poor overt. The one errs of self-confidence, the other of desperation. What Agur desired was that safe middle-ground, where happily so large a proportion of people stand. He who *owes nothing*, and has his daily bread, is not poor. Great wealth could put him in no better position, except in making his cloth a little finer, and spreading more butter on his bread. To lack a large bank account is not to be poor, if, on the other hand, there is no dead weight of debts. As long as courage, activity and knowledge of some useful occupation remain to us, and we owe no man anything but to love one another, then we are not indigent.

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"Forgive me, poverty!" cries a French writer, "that I confounded thee with indigence. To wealth man fastens himself as one grown upon a rock, but in contented poverty, which is not neediness, one sits as in a skiff, where one may easily cut the cable and drift away to the better land."

Now I find that as to money in the Home, three writers of diverse nations give us three precepts which may be well applied. Cicero tells us, that "Economy is in itself a great revenue." Joubert, a Frenchman, warns us, that "Debts abridge life." While Lord Bacon gives us this counsel: "Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayst get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly: yet have no abstract or friarly contempt of them."

Now among all its other havings, the Home must have a money basis. Money must build its shelter; feed, and clothe, and school its inmates; provide for their old age; and as new members are added to the family, parental foresight discerns their coming needs, and reaches out for means to supply them. To provide this money basis of the Home, Providence has bestowed upon us humans, acquisitiveness, or an ability for getting. The bestowal of this impulse is beneficent; for, setting aside a deal of absurd declaiming on the incompatibility of wealth and virtue, we face the facts that pauperism prevents a man fulfilling his duty as a man and a citizen, and in nine cases out of ten is the child of laziness and twin-brother of crime; while though wealth does not create virtue, it is obviously not inimical to it, and dwells with it very peaceably in the same nest; and between these two is that safe middle-ground, affording living room, scope for useful labor, where, as on a plain removed alike from burning heats and biting cold, the Home may be happily established. To reach this position of comfort should be the aim of every family; such a position should be desired and labored for with a tenacity which never relaxes into

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inertia, and with a quiet hopefulness which will keep us from being over-anxious about the morrow. In this proper pursuit of family independence, we must consider the ***means to employ***, the *dangers to avoid*, the *frame of mind in which to live*.

I tried to impress upon my nieces from the time when they set up housekeeping for themselves that saying of Cicero "Economy is in itself a great revenue." I had the sentence illuminated and framed, and presented it to each of them, as also to others of my young friends: I desired to create in our village a feeling that economy was creditable. Now just as there is a wide difference between poverty, or the state of *unwealth* and indigence or neediness, so there is a great difference between economy and penuriousness. Economy builds up the home; penuriousness saps its strength. I warned my young friends that the great danger of beginners is a contempt of littles. They would see that a saving of a hundred or a thousand dollars was reasonable, but they do not appreciate the virtue of saving as many cents. As says the old proverb, "Many a little makes a mickle," but we elderly people, who have seen the littles grow to mickles, and have outlived long examples in compound interest, understand much more clearly than the young the value of small economies; therefore, while with the elderly these economies are matters of reason and experience, with the young they must be matters of habit. Young people's habits are of course matters of education, and parents should realize that by instructing their children in the practice of economy, they are laying the foundations of their future fortunes the comfort and stability of their homes, and the fortunes of their grandchildren. I saw very clearly this difference in habits of economy between Helen and Miriam as young housewives. Helen had never been trained to consider her small expenditures; she would lose or spend numerous little sums, and remark that such a little made no difference—a few shillings, or

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cents, or a dollar or two; "it would be all the same in a lifetime."

I replied to her one day, "Indeed, my dear girl, it will *not* be all the same in a lifetime. You are but little past twenty; you hardly look forward to living less than thirty or forty years longer, and it will be far from all the same in that lifetime whether these littles are saved or wasted. Suppose, in littles, you waste less than one dollar a week, say fifty dollars in a year: put that out at six per cent. compound interest, and in forty years you have seven thousand seven hundred dollars. Now it would make perhaps a deal of difference to you whether at sixty-two you had that much more to live on or to bequeath. It might be a deal of good to one of your children to have that much additional."

Shortly after Mary Watkins was married, Miriam invited a small company to meet her at tea. The conversation happened to turn on this question of building up domestic finances; and some of the young women said to me: "Aunt Sophronia, what are the rules for getting rich?"

"Come," I said, "do you suppose the answer to that question will be short or long, hard or easy?"

Said Helen, "I should think it would be very long, as there are millions of ways of getting rich, and people have been busy for several thousand years in discussing them. It must be a very hard question to answer, also, inasmuch as most people find it so very hard to get rich."

"All that has been said can be boiled down to a very short and simple answer," I replied; "and all the difficulty in the work lies in the needful self-sacrifice. The question first is, What do you mean by getting rich? Do you wish to know how to lay up an immense superfluity—to become millionnaires? Or will you be content to call honest independence, enough to live upon tastefully without fear or favor, enough to keep away the wolves

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of debt and want, and to send out from your door, on your errands, the full-handed angels of benevolence—will you call that being rich?"

"I will," said Miriam; "more would be a useless burden."

"You know," said Helen, laughing, "that it is said that Astor gets only his 'keep' out of his wealth, so that all beyond the keep is really a burden and not a help to him."

"Then as you will call modest competence, comfortable assurance, wealth," I replied, "I will give you the rules, which are few and simple, and easily performed by self-sacrifice. Work hard; see and improve all small opportunities; keep out of debt and carefully economize. That is the best that all the wisdom of the world has been able to digest and formulate as rules for getting rich. The matter is simple and lies in a nutshell: have the end definitely before you; do your own work toward it and do it honestly, and don't give up until you have reached your goal; the same plain, straight, unadorned and yet passable road is open to all."

"I don't know," said Miriam, "but the seizing of small opportunities would be the hardest to me, for I do not see things quickly."

"And I do know," said Helen, "that the 'work hard' and the 'economize' would be equally difficult to me, for I hate both, and yet—I want to help Frank get on in the world, and our children must be provided for."

"The 'keep out of debt' seems the hardest part to me," said Mary Watkins, "for there is a mortgage on our farm, and we think of buying more land, and that will mean more mortgage."

"These same difficulties," I said, "confront the man with a hundred thousand, which he is striving to make a million, and Betsy Rourke, whose husband earns thirty or forty dollars a month. The result will depend on now we manage the difficul-

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ties; the millionnaire may manage so as to get into the penitentiary, the poor-house, or be a pauper on the hands of his friends; Betsy Rourke may manage so as to secure a tidy cabin of her own for her old age; put all her children in the way of earning a better living than her own; have never a debt; always a little laid up for a rainy day, and die respected. Each of you may manage so as to live under a perpetual fear of being pushed into ruin by the first touch on you of sickness, loss, a death in the family, or by sudden hard times; or you may walk confidently inside of a safe, strong margin wherewith you have hemmed your affairs."

"Your mention of Betsy Rourke," said Mrs. Winton, "reminds me that we who visit a good deal among the poor in this town, and among the workers in our shops and factories, are not doing our duty by them in giving them clear, practical instructions, and a little encouragement in regard to the management of their money affairs. We could do it in a friendly way, without seeming to intrude on what is no concern of ours. The poor know nothing of political economy, and very nearly as little of domestic economy. The most of them in this town manage little more than to be one day in advance of starvation. They use up their earnings as they go; a little extra earnings does not mean a nest-egg for future savings, a pleasant addition made to the little balance in bank, but it means a day's pleasure excursion; some bit of finery; a grand dinner. It is harder for them to be prudent than to be industrious; they expect to work hard, but they do not expect to save carefully. They toil laboriously, and spend the money as recklessly as if it grew in their pockets."

"They think," said Miriam, "that what they can lay by is so little that it is not worth the trying to accumulate."

"And yet these littles can grow into a handsome reserve. My mother-in-law had the same cook for thirty-five years. My father-in-law left this old servant five hundred dollars; she her-

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self saved every week a portion of her wages; she dressed comfortably; always gave her little contributions at church; helped some of her poor relations; was thrifty without being mean; at the end of the thirty-five years' service she had thirty-five hundred dollars laid up; at this time she became crippled and retired from work, living in modest ease for ten years on what she had saved, and finally providing for her burial and giving some little legacies to her friends. Her savings had made her independent in age, when she might have been a pauper."

"Our working-people," I said, "receive wages which make them comfortable as long as they are earning them, but owing to their habit of using up all as fast as they earn it, as soon as a slack time comes, or an accident happens, or an epidemic is abroad, they are reduced to straits. They would lay up four or five dollars a week if they had the chance, but they despise the little which it is in their power to save."

"But, aunt, it *is* so little. There is Hannah's brother: he gets thirty dollars a month, and that is as little as they can live on."

"If they can live on thirty, by a little management they can live on twenty-nine. What is one dollar a month saved? Very little; but put out the twelve dollars at interest, and keep on adding to it at like rate, and in two years he has twenty-six dollars and a half, and it goes on increasing; in a few years he has the comfortable, self-respecting feeling of a man with a decent little balance in bank. It is worth trying."

"There is a vast difference," said Mrs. Burr, "between thrift and avarice or meanness. True, the line between thrift and greed is so closely drawn that some people overstep it without being aware. Our little savings should not be made at the expense of strict honesty, of charity, of sympathy; there are things far more useful and important in a home than saving We are not to make our small savings, or our great savings, by

grinding the faces of the poor; by depriving ourselves of rest, and of things needful to our health and for the prolongation of our lives; nor by restricting our children of proper gratifications and recreations, making the memory of their youth a bitterness."

"The question seems to be in order," said Miriam, "*how* are we to economize? where shall we make our savings, small and great?"

"Here," I said, "is field for self-denial. We must not expect to set out in life as lavishly as we should like to end. We can only do that if some amiable ancestor has endowed us with a fortune. The sons and daughters leave homes which the exertions and carefulness of parents have built up into a degree of luxury; mother has her two or three servants; father his horse and carriage; the house is large; furnishings are handsome; the summer affords a long vacation. The young folks fancy that the new home wherein they set up must have all these appointments. They are not extravagance for the parents, who have the results of years to fall back upon, but they are extravagance to the young folks, the results of whose years are yet to come. They forget that father and mother began in the narrow way; that they had a small house, and economized as to fires, and waited a year before they furnished the spare-room; and mother did the most of her own work, and father walked to his place of business, and they went to no costly entertainments; looked at fine goods through shop windows, and not over counters purse in hand. The veteran may rest on his laurels, the tyro must earn his. If our young people wish with no capital to live like people who have capital, the result will be debt, disaster, disgrace. Who can count the homes kept in constant gnawing misery by living beyond their means; debt pressing; exposure menacing, credit slipping away! Life is shortened by extravagant living. If we try to build a business on show, by seeming to have what

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we really do not possess, then we are building our house upon the sand, and when the rains descend, the winds blow, and the floods beat, then the Home shall fall into miserable ruin.

"This extravagance in living does not necessarily mean a coachman in livery; a bay span; a box at the opera; velvet and point-lace, and a splendid house; extravagance in living is to be living beyond our means, be they large or small. If our means are equal only to expending nine hundred, and we live up to a thousand, then we are extravagant, although we hired no cab; wore no silk gown; bought no pine-apples; kept no nurse-maid. We were extravagant where another would have been very saving, because we went beyond our means; he kept within his. Extravagance in living stands before our mind's eye a gorgeous creature: plumed like a bird of paradise; glittering like a Damascene blade; splendid if dangerous. Extravagance should rather appear as a corrupting corpse, a hangman's rope clutched in its discolored hand; a ghastly wound across the throat; a gibbet behind it, and the pit of perdition yawning in front; for this extravagance, equally common to men and women, equally criminal to both, stands at the back of ninety-nine one-hundredths of the suicides, defaulters, murderers, forgers, delinquent guardians and trustees, plunderers of widows and orphans. This extravagance leers at us over the wrecks of homes and reputations and brains; it gibbers at us from the mad-house; creeps to the penitentiary cell; sweeps slowly by in the dishonored bier; lies ghastly in the morgue; goes down darkly and rises festering from the waters in the 'unknown drowned.'

"If wives see that their husbands incline to extravagance, they should hold them back from this brink of ruin with all their power; and they should beware of extravagance in their own persons, for by it many a wife has become a millstone about her husband's neck to sink him in a sea of misery."

"You are so earnest that you frighten me," cried Helen.

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THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

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"I feel that she cannot be too earnest," said Miriam; "and I eschew extravagance with all my heart from this time forth. But, Aunt Sophronia, one may be extravagant—that is, be living, although but a little, beyond their income—without knowing it: they may be sinking in a quicksand before they are aware that they have stepped upon it. How shall we know that, while striving to be economical, we are not becoming penurious, and that, trying to be fair, we are not extravagant?"

"In the first place, know your income; and in the second place, mark your expenses. In other words *keep accounts*. As to avoiding penuriousness, we must remember that over all we have God holds a first mortgage, and humanity a second. Of these two mortgages we must pay the interest honestly: they are our first debts, and when they are fairly attended to, then we must mark our accounts. We shall have avoided the Scylla of penuriousness, and we must steer clear of the Charybdis of extravagance: we shall do this by means of a diligent study of our account-books. Great men have not despised careful account-keeping; indeed, their carefulness in this particular was one token of their greatness. Washington and Wellington were both very particular in account-keeping. We should dare to look resolutely at the state of our affairs: bankruptcies oftener arise in a neglect in scrutinizing our accounts than in any other one cause. England and France have laws obliging all business people to keep proper account-books. Every housewife should have her account-books. When a servant enters her employ, she should put down the coming into service and the rate of wages; every payment should be scrupulously set down in the servants' presence as they receive the wages. All the daily expenditures should be set down; each month the account should be footed up; the monthly proportion of rent, lights, fuel, wages, be added, and the amount compared with the month's income. If the amount oversteps the income, or so

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squarely meets it that there is not that needed margin for the small savings, then revise the account and take warning. Where needlessly was spent the dollar? What costly item for the table can be replaced by one more suitable to our means? Where was the useless indulgence, which, denied, would have brought this account into proper shape? Where shall our next saving be scrupulously made? Let us discern between the needful and the needless. Can next month be brought to settle the deficit of this, so that the year shall not tell the story of our folly? Let us now take, by a month of self-denial, the consequences of our carelessness, and we shall arise and do better."

"We must surely keep accounts," said Miriam, "but these things which you have suggested to us seem rather in the way of preventing expenditures than of making money I suppose it is true that we are enriched not so much by what we make as by what we save; but let us have at least one rule for gaining."

"I do not know any rule for gaining," said Mrs. Burr, "which would come before persistency in a course well begun. Do not become restless, think that you accumulate too slowly, that some other line of life would be better, and so change your business. A woman has much influence over her husband's business. If she constantly finds fault with it, undervalues its efficiency or respectability, contrasts it unfavorably with others, she will presently move him to some change which may be disastrous. I knew a young woman whose husband owned a nice farm: she began to crave town life; she did not want to be a farmer's wife, to bring up her children in the country; finally she persuaded him to sell the farm, and set up in the city as a real estate agent. At that business he has starved along ever since; his children are unhealthy and ill-provided; while the purchaser of the farm has a nice home and competence. I know another young woman who took it into her head that her husband had better study a profession than be a village grocer.

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He had a nice trade, but the couple went mad on a false idea of gentility. He gave up his business, studied medicine, did not succeed in getting a practice, and has lived from hand to mouth. We cannot say that change is never advisable: most rules have exceptions; but the safe rule is to persevere in the line of life upon which one has entered. Often the safest business is the slowest. This is particularly true of farming: almost no farmers who attend faithfully to their own work and avoid speculations are ever bankrupts; but as their gains are very slow, especially in the beginning years, when they are making repairs, building, fencing, perhaps paying a mortgage, they think that they will never do better, and they want a change."

"One danger in making these changes," said Mrs. Winton, "is that you throw away the progress made, and the knowledge acquired in the business already begun: when you change you go back to the beginning. Having half learned farming does not put you half through with the grocery business, but if you go into groceries you must begin at the A B C. One business does not furnish us the alphabet for others: each has its own."

"That fits our experience," said Cousin Ann; "for the first five years that we were on the farm, we could not see that we had made anything but our keep and improvements: we had not paid a dollar on the principal of the mortgage. But though we felt discouraged, we looked at the matter squarely: we had gained much experience; our buildings were in order; our fences were in order; the land was in far better condition than when we got it; our young cattle were beginning to be of value; we were in a much better position to go on and make money than when we began; and, indeed, from that time our former work began to tell, and we made money fairly fast Father has always warned our boys not to be changeable. He said to Fred and Reed, when they thought they might find a

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more profitable way of using their farms: 'Don't change from fruit and vegetables to sheep. You have been working at the fruit and vegetables until you understand them; no one can cheat you in them; your start is made; you have run for your jump; your momentum is gained—you lose all that by changing. Don't try to turn your stock-farm into a sorghum plantation, or go into beet-sugar or tobacco. That might all do if you started at it, but you have made your start in another line: you have raised stock; studied stock; arranged your farm for stock-raising. Don't throw away five years' work; stick to what you are at.'"

These remarks of Cousin Ann closed the conversation for that time, but, a few days after, Mary Watkins came to see me She said that she had been much struck with the saying, "Debts shorten life." A debt made a heavy burden to carry, and toil was harder for such a load. There was a mortgage on their farm. She wanted some advice as to how she could help pay it, and whether she had better encourage her husband to buy more land under a mortgage. She said a scrap of poetry kept ringing in her head—

"There is no use of talking, Charles, you buy that twenty more,
And we'll go scrimping all our lives, and always be *land-poor*.
For thirty years we've tugged and toiled, denying half our needs,
And all we have to show for it is tax-receipts and deeds."

"Well, Mary," I replied, "I cannot give you any advice about the purchase of land, for I do not know how you are situated, and I do not wish to interfere with your business; but I can give you a little advice as to the *dangers to avoid* in the getting of money, which advice may be of use to you. As debts do abridge life, avoid debts as you would poison or contagion. To do this you must live rigorously within your means. To live *within* our income, even if it be only by a sixpence, is to escape the degradation of neediness. Poverty is

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only relative. If you can keep out of debt, you are relatively rich: a man with five thousand a year, who gets yearly two hundred dollars in debt, is relatively poor. When by overstepping your income you get into debt, you purchase the worst evils of poverty—shame and fear. Haliburton says: 'No man is rich whose expenditures exceed his means, and no man is poor whose incomings exceed his outgoings.' Your first effort in paying off your mortgage will be to bring all your expenses within your income, and by all that you bring them within you can lessen your indebtedness. I should wish to be very sure of the propriety of getting more land, if I got a new debt with it. Again, Mary, do not be in haste to be rich. This haste is that taking thought and care for to-morrow which the Scripture condemns. This over-zeal for riches abridges life as much as debt does. People, in their hurry for increase of money, coin their very lives and souls. All the goodness and capacity for enjoyment dies out of their lives while they are striving for wealth. People in this pursuit of money deny themselves the comforts of life; they keep their children out of school to avail themselves of their labor; they deny them books, newspapers, society, decent clothes; they make them feel shame-faced and mean—all for what?—to roll them up a fortune which they will not be able to enjoy. They make their children coarse, ignorant, greedy, unloving, in order to have more money to leave them. But what good will this money do without friends, without the confidence and respect of the community? In spite of their money they will see all the prizes of life carried off by those whose parents were careful to give them those things which are better than money: *i. e.*, social qualities, education, good manners, affectionate feelings, general information. In over-haste to be rich, the energies, and sympathies, and cares of the parent are withdrawn from his children to the money-getting. The home devoid of attraction is a jail rather than a

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'dear nest' to the children. The intercourse between them and their parents has been hard, brief and cold; there is nothing to regret in leaving them. No tender recollections of sunny hours, of gratified tastes, of mutual enjoyments, bind them to home; as soon as they can they fly off to strangers and strange places, lacking that strongest tie to morality, a loving thought of home. If the children are worth laying up money for, they are doubly worth cultivating in all that is best in them; and in devoting ourselves too intensely to the pursuit of riches, we forsake the greater for the less. Don't, in your desire to save and to earn, descend into meanness. *Avoid illiberality* to servants, to children, to the public. As a mere matter of business, liberality pays well. Meanness hardens the heart, narrows our views, dries up our social instincts: men naturally hate and antagonize it. The child, treated illiberally, loses love for the parent. The servant, illiberally dealt with, loses all zeal in service, has no encouragement to render that faithfulness and energy which are beyond all purchase; meanly treated, deprived of even just gains, he retorts by doing for his master as little as he can. Neighbors miss the kind, neighborly act; the church comments on lack of charity; the dealer detects the scanty weight, the poor quality, the narrow bargains; and as we sow we reap; we get back our own coin, and can we complain if it is counterfeit, or has been clipped? A good deed done in a kindly temper is never thrown away: the bountiful sowing makes the bountiful harvest. Says the Scripture: 'The liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things he shall stand.' We can provoke unto love and good works. In the 'Vicar of Wakefield' Farmer Flamborough grew rich, although he was so honest, kind and unsuspecting that Mr. Jenkinson was always cheating him; while Mr. Jenkinson, shrewd enough, and mean enough to cheat, fell into poverty and prison. Bunyan tells us in a little rhyme:

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> "'There was a man and some did count him mad:
> The more he cast away, the more he had;'

and this riddle is thus unravelled:

> "'He who bestows his goods upon the poor,
> Shall have as much again, and ten times more.'

"Again, the wisest of men tells us that: 'There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty. There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.' A hard bargain is a bad bargain for the proposer; he may appear to gain, yet he will eventually lose. Be generous and unselfish in your endeavors to accumulate property; if you get it in a mean way, you will use it in a mean way; the habit of meanness will be stamped in your soul, and you will have made money itself your end, and experience that love of money which is the root of all evil. Nothing is more unhealthful, more life-shortening, more soul-cramping, than to be engrossed in money-getting; the Mammon worshipper is a mean man. Milton tells us that Mammon himself, in heaven, could not look up, so fastened were his eyes on the golden pavement! Therefore do not consider accumulation your chief good. You accumulate in order to strengthen, preserve and improve the Home; therefore don't let your accumulating be the destroying of the home. Don't accumulate in such a fashion that some day you shall wake to find your home gone; its hopes perished; its loves dried in their fountains; the children fled in disgust and soul-sickness; your hopes of heaven darkened; God forgotten; your so-called Home merely a whited and gilded sepulchre, full of rottenness and dead men's bones. Carry the vitality, the honor, the joyfulness of your home on with you in your course of accumulation. The story of King Midas is a parable which we should all lay to heart. Remember, Mary, all things are for our immortal part; for mind; for soul; the life is more than raiment. What is raiment to a corpse?

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What is money to him whose soul, body, heart, mind, celestial crown, have been sacrificed to gain it?"

"Thank you," said Mary, "for what you have said; I think I was beginning to consider accumulation a chief good, and money a chief end, instead of merely means to the end of true home building. I see money is as likely to be Abused as Used in the home. In the poem which I quoted are two other verses which I remember:

"'Our life is short, and full of care: the end is always nigh;
We seldom half begin to live, before we're doomed to die.
Were I to start my life again, I'd mark each separate day,
And never let a single one pass unenjoyed away.

"'If there were things to envy, I'd have them now and then,
And have a home that *was* a home, and not a cage or pen.
I'd sell some land, if it were mine, and fit up well the rest;
I've always thought, and think so yet—small farms, well worked, are best.'"

I fancy Mary persuaded her husband to her view, for they did not buy more land for some time.

The day that brings us into debt is a dark day; that is a light day—glad as the going out of Egypt—when one gets out of debt. I was at Cousin Ann's one day, when she read a little bit of poetry called "No Mortgage on the Farm," from the village paper. She said she appreciated it from her own experience; she remembered it was a glad day when Reuben paid off the last dollar of the mortgage, and though years had passed, the joy was yet fresh in her mind:

"While our hearts are now so joyful, let us, Mary, not forget
To thank the God of heaven for being out of debt;
For he gave the rain and sunshine, and put strength into my arm,
And lengthened out the days to see, No Mortgage on the Farm!"

"If any one can tell us what is a right state of mind in regard to Money in the Home, I think you can, cousin," I replied, "for you have had a large family for which to provide; you have had your narrow beginnings; your long days of struggle to free

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yourselves from debt; the constant, daily, arising needs to meet; and have at last reached a time when means are comfortably abundant."

"The main thing is," replied Cousin Ann, "to keep in view that we are getting the money not for itself, but for the good which it will secure; therefore we must be on the watch to take the good as it comes. We may say we are laying up the fortunes and securing the happiness of our children, but we must remember that childhood has its fortunes and its happiness as well as middle-life. Why deny our children the happiness and fortune of a few toys, in order that we may add dollars to other dollars for their future? The few toys may let in a whole flood of sunshine on the child's life. How do we know but they will be all the fortune that we can give it—that the little child may never grow up to claim its portion of goods—that all our bestowal of fortune on it must be limited to a doll, a tin-cart, and a yard of daisied sod? We deny the little girl a doll and playtime, and she prematurely becomes a hard-faced woman who never had a childhood. I have seen men who begrudged the time which they said their wives wasted over a stand of flowers; men who complained that a few pots of geraniums and verbenas cost too much; if their wives wanted flowers let them wait until they were rich, and they should have a garden full, or a hothouse. But the wife died long before riches came, and flowers in plenty went into her coffin and upon her grave; it would have done her far more good if they had been put into her living hands!

"A very little outlay will often procure for some member of our families some gratification of taste, which will be richly repaid in love and happiness. Besides, we sometimes forget that these small gratifications have a positive effect on health and spirits, renewing both, and, in very truth, producing a better return in money and saving than almost any other outlay. The

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little token of thoughtfulness, of kindly remembrance, renews the courage—reminds one how much there is yet left to live for. We must know when to spare and when to spend. It is not well to have all the scrimping and saving done in one series of years, looking to have all the lavishing done in another decade. We must save and spend at the same time; pay as we go, and build up our home in taste, in comfort, in intelligence, in proportion as we are building it up in fortune."

"And when we are speaking of the use of money in the home, we must not forget," I said, "that while one form of its abuse is in penuriousness, another form of abuse is lavishness. Children get too much money to spend which they never earned, and of which they do not know the value. I heard of a man who said that he just put some money in a drawer, and let his children go there and help themselves. There would be account-keeping, saving, good judgment, when all the youngsters had to do was to get out the money and use it, and no questions asked! I have seen a child of ten, going off for a three days' visit, handed five dollars to buy candy and nuts. A young school-mate of Miriam's was so liberally supplied with pocket-money that she really did not know what to do with it. One day she bought a dollar's worth of candy; then opening the paper, and finding the first bit flavored with peppermint, a thing which she disliked, she tossed the whole parcel into the mud of the street. Another girl whom I knew, received from home a pair of pretty ornaments which cost ten dollars; she wore them a day or two, then presented one to her room-mate, and the next week lost the other. Girls thus recklessly given dress and spending money are really driven into extravagance, and are at last the women whose husbands become bankrupts, defaulters, suicides. Boys who may lavishly spend money out of the paternal pocket learn to smoke, drink, play cards, race horses: they apply themselves to no useful occupation, have no high principles, learn nothing which

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shall make them self-dependent. Money which comes to young people so easily, of whose bitter earning they know nothing, of whose deprivation they know nothing, is a snare and a curse. Better the chances of the little bootblack earning his dimes, and respecting them as proceeds of his labor; better a million times the farm-boy, whose dollar represents the potatoes he planted and dug, or the chickens he fed and tended for a six months, than the boy who gets his twenty or fifty dollars, to spend unquestioned, and to whom that money is just so much green paper out of father's pocket.

"Children should be taught to earn money; to save reasonably their money; to spend it judiciously; to give out of their own funds, not merely going to father with the cry, 'Give me a cent for contribution!' and then putting it in the box, and calling it their own giving: shall we give of that which costs us nothing? Children should be taught to take care of their money, not losing it heedlessly here and there, laying it down and forgetting where they put it; so they should be instructed to keep accounts; this forms the habit of method and of reasoning in their business: the spendthrift boy will be the spendthrift man.

"Another abuse of money in the home is to keep all the money for that one home and its needs and luxuries, forgetting that the one home is but a unit among many; that as we are human, humanity has its claims on us all; that in the civilized state every man is more or less dependent on his neighbor, and must do a share for others while he is working for himself. There are human beings without homes; human beings sunk so in degradation, so steeped in indigence, that knowledge and means of home-making are out of their reach; there are in the world plenty of stray waifs, childless, widowed women, relationless men, friendless children, hopeless invalids: for these society must make homes and provide teachers and refuges. One of the abuses of our money is to gather it all into our own circle, centre it upon

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ourselves, desire to surfeit our own appetites, to crowd our own lives with pleasures, and our own homes with luxuries, and refusing to distribute as we have opportunity to those who are in need. A grand use of money in the home is to give us to taste the blessedness of doing good. The hundred busy hands which have gathered in the fortune should be ready to communicate; the hundred eyes which have looked for opportunities of increasing our store should look wisely abroad, to see what fields can be watered by it, what waste places sown, what deserts made to become gardens.

"And here, as said our minister the other day, arises the much vexed question: 'How much have we a right to use for selves? What is a rational and proper style of living for a Christian? And to this it can only be answered that every man is a law to himself. If no one used any luxuries, trade, and manufacture, and invention would be at once crippled. He who has many servants, justly treated, wisely governed, before whom he sets a right example, makes his home a home to many, supports just so many more of his fellows. More physical luxuries are needed by some than by others: one man's nature only gets its development in a great library; pictures are another man's natural mind-food; let him thank God for money to buy them, and so support artists. The only thing needful is to realize that in our money we are God's stewards and our brother's keepers. Let us feel that in earning, in keeping, in spending our money we are those who must give account. And so as Bacon warns us, let us not hasten so to be rich that we cannot get honestly; let us not so spend our possessions on ourselves that we cannot give liberally; let us not love our means so well that we cannot spend cheerfully; let us not spend so recklessly that we begin to live selfishly and greedily; let us not love money so well that we will be loath to leave this world because of leaving our worldly belongings; and let us profess no scorn of money

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like that professed by the begging friars, who, be it remarked, were always especially eager in getting!

"And here I would only add a few monitions which I impressed on Helen's little Tom.

"If men are to hate debt, boys must hate debt; let them be taught not to borrow, and not to beg: it is training a boy in pauperism to allow him to hint or boldly ask for money from guests and relations.

"If the man is to be upright in business, the boy must be upright. Do not think it is no matter if you neglect to return your mother's change; if you take, half by force or by calm assumption, your little sister's or brother's money. Boys who act in this way will not be honorable business men.

"Don't be a boy-miser—hoarding your own money, never making a present, never giving in charity of your own, always eager to receive and never ready to give.

"Take a pride in earning money: you will respect money more, and be more likely to be honest in your dealings, if you have learned how to earn money for yourself.

"Don't make hard bargains with your mates, taking advantage of their need or of their ignorance.

"Don't be lavish, spending to make the other boys stare, buying things which you do not need merely to show off. Remember the boy is what the man will be."

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CHAPTER XVII.

ATTENTION TO DRESS IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S IDEA OF TASTE AND FITNESS IN DRESS.

BELINDA BLACK came in to see me one autumn morning; she often drops in, but that day she came especially because she had on a new Fall suit. Whenever Belinda has a new gown, she is seized with a mania for walking through all the streets, and for visiting her friends until all have had a view of the new apparel. Indeed, she takes a bland, innocent, unconcealed delight in new clothes, a delight which has so much childish simplicity in it that it is mainly amusing. And yet Belinda is quite old enough to be reasonable; a great many women never do become reasonable on the subject of dress. Well, as I said, in came Belinda, and chatted away, careful that she sat in a good light and in an advantageous position to display her last dress. I chanced to ask her why she had not been in her place as one of the sub-teachers in a class for sewing, which I have for poor children, and she said that just at that hour she had an engagement with the dress-maker, and so forgot. "That is it, you see," said Belinda, with a little laugh, "the dress-maker puts everything else out of my foolish head; I suppose I am even worse than other people in that folly; but we all think too much about dress," concludes Belinda in a judicial tone, while secretly smoothing out a ruffle and regarding the trimming on her sleeve with great complacency.

"I differ from you, indeed," I replied; "I conclude the trouble is that we do not *think* half enough about our dress."

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"Oh, Miss Sophronia!" cried Belinda, "I thought it was a waste of time and a token of a weak mind to think of dress."

"It depends entirely upon how you think of it, my dear. In the way of imagination, I grant you, we may think a deal too much about it; in the way of reason and common-sense, generally not half enough. As to weak minds only occupying themselves with this matter some of the very finest minds have lent themselves to its consideration. The Bible itself gives us various rules about it; great legislators have passed laws concerning it; physicians have written much on the subject; and divines have preached sermons and written books, also, about it."

"Why," says Belinda, opening wide her eyes, "I did not know that the Bible had anything about dress, unless you mean about the fig-leaf aprons, or how the Lord made Adam and Eve coats of skins—Eve must have been very beautiful to stand such dressing as that without a ribbon or a bit of lace—or perhaps you mean about the priest's dress as we had it once in our Sunday-school lesson."

"I meant none of those. I fear you have never read your Bible through, my child."

"Oh, yes, I have; straight through, and got five dollars for it."

"Then, while you were going through it, I fear the five dollars must have been more in your mind than what you were reading. Read it through again, Belinda; not for five dollars, but for the sake of knowing what is in it. However, I will tell you what it says of dress: Isaiah says, 'Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers; the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, and the rings, and the nose-jewels; the changeable suits of apparel, the mantles, and the wimples, and

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the crisping-pins; the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.'"

"Why," cried Belinda, much interested, "what a quantity of things, just such as we have now, it mentions! I did not dream that we were so old-fashioned in our ornaments and styles; only to think, all these things about twenty-three or four hundred years ago! As for the nose-jewels it would be a blessing to lose them, and the glasses—I suppose it means little glasses to carry around with them, possibly hanging at their waists, made of polished metal, but used for looking-glasses—those *would* be ugly too, for if one *does* spend a deal of time looking in the glass, one does not want all the world to know it, nor wish to be doing it in public."

"And yet I *have* seen ladies' fans with little glasses set in the side, and I have seen their possessors very sedulously gazing into them—say at church."

"Why," cried Belinda, flushing, "I have one of those very fans! I never thought of it before, and maybe *I* sit looking in it! I'll paste a picture over the glass the minute I go home; I never before thought how ugly it was. But how very odd! rings, veils, head-dresses, bracelets, and tablets, such as we carry to parties, to put down our partners on! Who'd have thought it!"

"Another prophet complains of the women sewing pillows into the sleeves of their dresses."

"How hideous!" cried Belinda. "No one would think of such a fashion now-a-days."

"I should not like to be security as to what folly one would not think of. But as for pillows in the sleeves, I remember very well a pair of little pillows stuffed with down, which my mother had, and which she told me were worn in her early married days, fastened in the upper part of the sleeve, to make the arms set out widely. They may come in fashion again."

"I'd never wear them—never," protested Belinda.

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"I used to hear people say, in looking at the portraits of Queen Elizabeth, where her majesty's waist and head look as if rising out of a hogshead—wherein she is standing, that if hoops came in fashion again, they would never wear them, and yet they did, great reed-filled skirts, as big as hogsheads, or even bigger; absurd as Queen Elizabeth's."

"I suppose," responded Belinda, meekly, "that there is no telling what one will do, when a fashion comes in. What is there more in the Bible about dress?"

"Paul writes in 2d Timothy: 'that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.'"

"Why," said Belinda, argumentatively, "one would not want their hair hanging straight behind their ears like a wild Indian's: and I can't see what harm there is in gold, or pearls, or costly dress."

"I do not fancy that Paul would have approved of the wild Indian style of hair-dressing. You notice he says *adorn*, which suggests that he desired neatness and good taste, with a certain gravity and simplicity; and as he suggests good works instead of the gold or pearls, or costly array, I presume that he meant to hint that as there is so much poverty and pain in the world to be relieved, so much ignorance to be instructed, so many souls which need a preached gospel, and so much money required, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, nurse the sick, and send the teachers to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, that the means of a Christian woman might far better be employed thus in behalf of doing good, and laying up treasure in heaven, than in procuring gold, pearls, or costly array. As to the hair, you will see yourself, Belinda, that there is a vast difference between dragging it negligently into a tumble-down knot, and puffing it, stuffing it, giving here a friz, there a braid, there a ringlet, there a plastered curl, there a braid of another style,

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that excessively ornate method of hair-dressing which is not for elegant comfort, but is for attracting attention—that attention not the loving pleasure of our friends, but the insolent stare of passers on the street."

"Now," said Belinda, uneasily, as she was not without fault in this respect, "what do some of those wise, good people—those divines, for instance—say about dress?"

I took down one of my "old-fashioned books" and read a fragment from good Bishop Hall. "In thy apparel avoid profuseness, singularity, and gaudiness; let it be decent, and suited to the quality of thy place and purse. Too much punctuality, and too much moroseness, are the extremes of pride. Be neither too early in the fashion, nor too long out of it, nor too precisely in it. What custom hath civilized hath become decent; until then it was ridiculous. Where the eye is the jury, the apparel is the evidence; the body is the shell of the soul; apparel is the husk of the shell, and the husk will often tell you what the kernel is. Seldom does solid wisdom dwell under fantastic apparel; neither will the jester fancy be inured within the walls of a grave habit. The clown is known by his motley coat."

"Why, how simple, easy, and full of common-sense, that sounds!" said Belinda. "I wish folks preached like that now-a-days: I would learn so much more than I do."

"Would you? Now tell me, what was our minister's text yesterday, and what was his subject?"

"Why—y—y—I don't believe I know. In fact, I was looking most of the time at Grace Winton's new bonnet, and at Mrs. Burr's lovely new tie."

"Then perhaps our minister was giving us just as simple common-sense as Bishop Hall, and you missed it; and if you had been one of Bishop Hall's hearers you might have been considering the extent of somebody's farthingale, or the velvet

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in their mantle. The fault is less in the words of preachers than in the ears of hearers."

I suppose Belinda concluded that she had had instruction enough for that morning, so she soon went home. She did not forget our talk, however, but at the next Sewing Society detailed much of it to the roomful of young people who were working together in Mrs. Burr's back parlor; and just as I had finished distributing the work to the seniors in the front room, Grace Winton called me.

"Aunt Sophronia, you are to come and sit with us, and answer for this new heresy you have been inculcating in Belinda Black. She says you have absolutely been warning her that she ought to think more about dress; that we all ought."

I went in with a child's apron which I was making.

"You all think too much about dress in the way of imagination," I said.

"There, Belinda!" cried Cousin Ann's younger daughter: "I was quite sure that you were mistaken."

"For instance," I continued, "you spend hours in considering how you would look in a new walking-suit, or which of the new colors is most stylish, and would best suit your complexion You spend whole days in trying to arrange a dress for a party—a dress which shall be just a little prettier than any one else would have; you spend all church time wondering how you would look in somebody's new hat; you spend on new trinkets, which you do not need, the money which you ought to give to the Missionary Society; you spend on over-doing your hair, time when you ought to be helping your mothers with the mending; you stay away from prayer-meeting to embroider you a jacket, or put another ruffle on a petticoat; you tease your fathers for more money than they can afford to spend on your winter outfit, and you coolly let your mother wear her old coat one winter more, so that *you* can spend more money on the decorating of one of your gowns."

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"Oh, now, Aunt Sophronia!" cried the girls, indignantly.

"Well, I knew a girl *once* who insisted on having one more dress in her winter outfit, although she knew that if it were bought, her mother, instead of buying for herself one new and handsome dress, would be forced to get a very shabby thing for her only new gown; and yet this girl needed the extra dress so little, that in packing up her trunk for school, she absolutely forgot it, and left it hanging in the closet, where it hung until after Christmas."

"Now, Aunt Sophronia," said Grace Winton, energetically, "that was as much the mother's fault as the girl's; no mother should be so weakly yielding, should so pander to the selfishness of her child; she should have brought her up better."

"No doubt, Grace; however, this girl did not live here in our town. Let me proceed to observe to you, that you do not think half enough about your dress—"

"There! what did I tell you!" cried Belinda.

"In the way of reason and common-sense. It is our duty to think about our dress; to apply some of our very best thoughts to it. Next to the question of food, that of dress is the most important of physical questions which can be put to us. On our proper dressing much of our good health depends; if we do not have good health, we cannot have our brains in the best working order; we shall be also captious, selfish, exacting, fretful, desponding; demanding much of others, and able to do little for them. He who is an invalid, in God's providence, is filling some niche made for him, and performing some part in creation; a part which may in the revealings of the next world shine out very beautifully; but those who are invalids in virtue of their own folly, of their own disregard for plain laws of health, are leaving undone the work which God meant them to do, and are adding to the burdens of humanity. If you admit that *health* is a matter of high importance, you must admit that the question

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of dress, which so much concerns that of health, is also very important. Therefore we must *think* about dress as it concerns *health.* But we may also see the question of dress lifted out of the range of the merely physical and put into the domain of morals. We are bound to think about dress as it concerns *honesty*—honesty to God and to our neighbor. Another way in which we are to think about dress is as it concerns *charity.* Now if you faithfully debate with yourselves the question of dress as it has to do with health, honesty, and charity, and you uprightly carry out the convictions of duty at which you arrive, I think there will thereafter be no fault to be found with your dress, and that for thinking about it you will be more attractive in yourselves, more helpful in your homes, and more useful to the world at large."

"Shall we begin by disregarding fashions?" asked Grace.

"That old preacher from whom you read said not," said Belinda.

"Fashion must be brought to the bar of common-sense, and must be tried by the laws of health, honesty and charity; if she has transgressed none of these, in a new device, then she has a right to promulgate it."

"But I thought dress was a mere matter of good taste," observed the eldest Miss Black.

"Good taste will be secured when we meet the requirements of health, honesty and charity."

"Do you think," asked Miss Black, "that it is a sin to wear ear-rings?"

"Not a sin," I replied, "if they are paid for. But I do not think that they are in good taste."

"And in what respects not?"

"First, they are a relic of barbarism, which pierces the flesh to introduce ornaments. The grossest form of this injury of the body to ornament it, is in tattooing. Next, the piercing the ear

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all around its rim, piercing the nose and the lips to introduce rings or bars of jewelry—indeed, the fashion described by some African travellers, of stretching the lips entirely out of shape for rings and bars of metal, must be more hideous than any tattooing. Second, if the ear is beautifully made in itself, it is an ornament to the human head, which will only be marred by piercing it: the ring will injure its shape or otherwise detract from its beauty. Third, if the ear is less than perfect in its shape, then the ring simply attracts attention to its lack of beauty. If there is any coarseness in the skin, or lack of grace in contour, then the jewelry makes this more apparent; while if complexion and outline are perfect, then 'beauty unadorned is adorned the most;' anything violently intruded upon them, as the cutting of the flesh for the reception of a bauble, takes away something of their perfections. It is said that the Chapel of the De Medicean Tombs, in Florence, is more beautiful than beauty; if that is true in that case, it is in no other."

"Aunt Sophronia," said Grace, "we are always quarrelling here, in a mild way, about frizzes. Do settle that for us."

"If I settled it for you to-day, you would be all back to your own opinions to-morrow. However, I am quite ready to give you my views as to hair-dressing in general. First, then, great neatness should be observed in regard to the hair. Nature intended it as an ornament. It is several times mentioned in the Bible as a rare beauty. All the painters and sculptors have delighted in portraying it in grace and luxuriance. We should respect our own personal adornments and appearance, and try to improve them lawfully. All dyes and articles, to change the color of the hair, should be avoided as both dangerous and in bad taste. Nostrums for increasing its growth, restoring it, and so forth, are generally dangerous, as having in them lead and other poisons which are bad for the health, and in a variety of cases have produced skin diseases, paralysis, or disease of

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the brain: avoid all these restoratives, renewers and invigorators of any kind. Use on the hair cold water, plenty of brushing, and clean it when needful with a little tepid water and ammonia, rinsing it with tepid water and bay rum, and wiping and brushing it dry. All very tight or small braiding, all curling on irons, or with hot tongs, all crimping it on wires, bits of tin, hair-pins, or with hot pencils, is very injurious; it stiffens the hair, robbing it of its natural gloss and flexibility, and it burns and splits the ends, preventing further growth. The ends of the hair should occasionally be trimmed off with the scissors, and the hair of children should be cut short until they are ten or eleven years old. After fevers, or cases of severe illness, it is well to cut the hair short to produce a fresh and silken growth. Every person in dressing the hair should regard the method which will be becoming to their own faces, whether that method is the fashion or not. The fashion may be to roll the hair back from the face, but some people with very high, broad foreheads and prominent eyes, would have their appearance much injured by this fashion. Now beauty is a gift of God, and we should be glad to look as well as we can. Again, the fashion may be to bring the hair well down over the forehead, but with some people the forehead is the prettiest feature, which it is a pity thus to conceal. So let every one arrange their hair to suit their own faces. People should always take time enough to dress the hair neatly; but I put it to your common-sense, is it right for a reasonable soul, set by God in a world full of work, to stand for hours before a glass dressing the hair? What good will the time thus spent be to them, or to any one else? I also commend it to your thinking, how deplorable it is for any woman, old or young, to come down among her family in the morning, her front-hair twisted up in colored papers, or over strips of tin, her back-hair unbrushed, drawn hurriedly into an ungainly bunch, ends

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dangling, stray hairs flying, dust lying on the hair, and thus made hideous, she sits a sort of spectre at the family-table, spends the morning over her work, and by afternoon, or perhaps at nearly evening, she takes out tins and papers, frizzles and braids, curls and elaborates for strangers, possible guests, as she would not do for her own family; and she comes to the tea-table looking very fine, while at breakfast she was a most untidy spectacle. Is breakfast so unworthy a meal? Is the image to be left for the day in the mind of father, husband or brother of so little consequence? And, lastly, as to dressing the hair—is it right, is it becoming to modest maids, to women professing religion, to elaborate and tower up their hair, their own and quantities bought, filling it out with rats and cushions, folds, puffs, bands, braids, curls, loops, frizzes, to attract the gaze of people, kin and strangers, promiscuously, to the face? Behold the extremes: the woman of the Orient hides her face under a big veil, as if to be seen were pollution; the woman of the Occident draws her hair far from her face, decorates it in a fashion to attract all eyes, sets her hat as far as possible from her countenance, and goes out, intent on being stared at."

The girls all laughed, and some of them blushed.

"What have you to say about high-heeled boots—real high, narrow, French heels? We are always disputing over them," said Belinda.

"They are among the most dangerous things in the world."

"Oh, they're not dangerous when you are used to them. You can soon walk on them without tripping."

"It is when you have got used to them that they are most dangerous. The human figure was meant to stand erect, well planted upon its feet: whatever throws the body out of this ordained equipoise disturbs nearly all of its functions. These high, narrow heels—placed not under the heel, but far forward under the foot—destroy the proper position of the spinal column

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in walking. With this column you must know that our nerves are closely connected. To these high and ill-placed heels, which destroy the balance of the body, may be attributed much of the prevalent spinal disease, a very large proportion of the diseases and weakness of the eye, and not a few cases of insanity. A famous oculist, one of the most famous in the world, when a patient goes to him, instead of first looking at the eye, says: 'Allow me to see your feet;' and if he sees a high-heel, a narrow, ill-placed heel, he says: 'Go and get a pair of shoes with low, squarely-set heels put under the heel of your foot, and *then* I will examine into your eye trouble, and begin to prescribe. I can do nothing for eyes where the spine is so thrown out of place by improper shoes.' The posture of the figure, forced upon the wearers of these shoes, is ungraceful in the extreme, and so is the gait. None of the old art masters ever chiselled or drew such figures as topple above a modern boot. The poets did not mean this plunging, tottering pace when they said:

"'And in her step the goddess was revealed.'"

"These high-heeled boots are generally too tight, among their other faults," said Mary Watkins. "We laugh at the Chinese for squeezing their feet, and then we squeeze our own; and between putting the foot in a false position for its work, throwing the weight on the front of the foot, and then cramping that, I think the feet of many American women are as badly treated as those of Chinese women."

"I think," said Sara, "that this propensity of human beings to pinch and compress some part of their bodies must be a temptation of the evil one to harm that which is made in God's image, and which he has pronounced very good. There is a tribe of Indians which presses the head out of shape; the Chinese devote their deforming proclivities to the feet; and

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nations called civilized, especially the English, French and Americans, crowd and compress the waist. Which is worse?"

"To compress the waist is surely worse than to squeeze the feet," said Mary, "for there we displace and hinder the action of organs more vital; we interfere with circulation, digestion and breathing, destroying possibilities of good blood; the complexion is ruined, being made rough and broken from watery blood, or is sallow and bloodless; the gracefulness of the step is destroyed by distorting the muscles of the sides and hips; people are languid, short-breathed, faint and hysterical, all because they think they are better artists than God, and know better how a human figure should look."

"You cannot too strongly decry this practice of compressing the waist," said Hester. "Physicians condemn it as destructive of human health, and artists scout it as ruinous to human beauty. When I was abroad and visited all the famous galleries of pictures and statuary in France, Italy and Germany, I noticed how very different the artist's idea of beauty is from that of the modern mantua-maker and the modern young lady. The artist draws or sculptures hair lightly waved or gracefully bound about the head, conforming to its contour, and not soliciting attention; the figure is erect, the shoulders thrown back, the head well poised, not thrown forward from the hips at an angle of thirty degrees, with the chin thrust into the air, as modern high heels demand; the waist has its free, natural curves, well developed, no narrowness, no sudden drawing in like the hideous body of a wasp, which many women apparently consider a model of beauty. One would think humanity had been striving to render itself, as far as possible, unlike the ideals of the old masters."

"It is all very well, Hester, for you to talk," said Miss Black, "when you have a figure which needs no helping: you and Grace Winton can afford to let your figures be as they were made."

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"Perhaps the whole secret of that is," said Hester, "that Grace and I have never given our figures any *hindering;* they grew as God made them, as anybody's might do. I doubt if there is any one in this room, except Grace and myself, who. from childhood, never had any tight or compressing article of dress."

"Now," cried Belinda, "I want to hear what Aunt Sophronia thinks of trains, long-trained gowns—things I doat on!"

"I'm sorry that you do," I said, "for I shall condemn your hobby at once. If trains are ever admissible, they belong to elderly ladies of somewhat stately figure, who use them for afternoon wear in their own houses, where there is no dust and dirt to make them revolting, or for such ladies at evening parties. The train is, from its weight and from its dragging upon the back, owing to its resistance as it sweeps over objects, a very disadvantageous thing for health. It impedes free motion, and falling about in wet weather in the streets, collects dampness around the feet and ankles. The train is wasteful and extravagant; it is seriously in the way of its wearer and of other people, while, as it becomes draggled, dirty, wet, and frayed from wear, it is an object abominable to behold. It is one of those styles of dress, like huge hoops, enormous bustles, and great chignons, designed to *attract attention*, a thing which no womanly woman should desire to do. Besides, I think a train is not modest for street wear. The train is caught up in one hand; in so doing, the train and the side of the dress are lifted often far above the ankles in a way really immodest. If a person appeared on the streets with a dress as far from the ground as the dress is frequently lifted by the train-wearer, she would be liable to insults, possibly to arrest. A dress hanging easily and gracefully, and clearing the ground in its entire circumference, is the only reasonable style of walking-dress for a lady. Such a dress is healthful, clean, does not weight the

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wearer, does not impede the step, nor occupy the hands; the chest and arms can be freely and naturally carried. The trouble is, that women do not stop to consider what is suitable to its use, to their own means, and to their own appearance; but they are carried away by an idea of fashion, so that women professing godliness are ruled in so very important a matter as dress by fashion which knows no godliness, and which may promulgate styles which were invented by very ungodly women indeed. But, my dear girls, do you not see that you might question what I thought of this, that, and the other item of dress, and my opinion would simply be an opinion? In a few hours your preferences or your prejudices would forget my arguments, even if they had at first commended themselves to you: you would furnish yourselves with new reasons for your previous course. What we need, is not to clip at externals, at branches, but to strike at roots. There must be great underlying principles upon which to rest; we must, as I told you, argue of our dress on the grounds of healthfulness, honesty and charity, and when in all these respects a fashion is unimpeachable, then we are right in adopting it."

It was now tea-time, and Mrs. Burr came to the back parlor, saying: "Miss Sophronia, you have abandoned us elders to-day to fall into scandal, gossip, slander, to quarrel over our minister, to devour each other: the evil will lie at your door."

I am not afraid," I replied, "for in these respects all of you ladies are a Committee of the Public Safety."

Shortly after this my nieces were spending an afternoon with me, and this subject of dress was renewed. I said that it was a subject which concerned greatly the happiness and well-being of home. Dress had much to do with health, and health was one of the most important home questions. Extravagance in dress had a sad effect on the prosperity of a home; households had been ruined in reputation and in fortune by extravagance,

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ambition and emulation in dress; neatness in dress added much to the cheerfulness and beauty of home; a thoughtful avoidance of over-dress made our neighbors, especially those of narrow means, more comfortable in church, and in companies or social gatherings where we met them. I have known women who were confirmed invalids, from a foolish, dangerous style of dressing. I knew of a mother who lost five of her children with croup, death constantly shadowing her household; and this mother, while in good circumstances, yet applied so little common-sense to dress, that her delicate children wore no flannels, and went with bare neck and arms in the winter! Another mother of my acquaintance lost all her six children with scarlet fever, losing them two by two in several successive winters; these children, elaborately dressed, went around the house and out walking, with two or three inches of bare blue leg exposed between the short stocking and the embroidered band at their knees.

An acquaintance of mine was so mad after extravagant dress for herself and daughters that, without the knowledge of her husband, she ran up a debt of two thousand dollars at one store, for dry goods, and to settle this her husband was obliged to give up a lot which he had toiled hard to purchase, and which would within six years have been worth ten thousand dollars to him. This woman's daughters all married, and the husband of each one became a bankrupt. Another person whom I have in my mind was of a saving, industrious turn, with very little idea of fitness or beauty. She would go about all day with her hair rough and untidy; no collar or cuffs, a soiled kitchen apron, or an ungainly frock, her shoes broken and trodden down at the heel. Her husband became afraid to invite a friend to go home with him, being almost certain to find his wife too untidy to be seen; her children, as soon as they were grown, experienced the same shame; all began to stay away from home to find friends,

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and the household was entirely destitute of family comfort or of home-feeling. Such instances as these should show us that dress *has* much to do with the happiness and prosperity of home, and consequently we should make it a study regarding its bearing on health, honesty, charity.

"I wish," said Helen, "that you would discuss it practically for my benefit as regards health."

"Dress," I resumed, "is designed for covering, for maintaining a proper warmth in our bodies, and in so doing to leave our muscular action free and unimpeded. If we look at the lower orders of animals, we shall see that the clothing which grows upon them is altered in its warmth from season to season: the horse thins out his hair, and the bird his feather-coat in the hot weather; not an animal has a covering which checks growth, motion, respiration, circulation. Did God mean man to be worse off in his clothing than a brute? He is left to provide his own clothing, and given facilities for so doing, that this clothing may scrupulously suit his conditions. We should change our garments with the changes of season: not fancy that we can harden ourselves to going all the year round with the same amount of underclothes. We should reason that a kind of underclothes which would prevent our feeling sudden changes in temperature would be suitable to us, so that the falling dew, a thunder-gust, a cold wind, would not chill us, producing, possibly, a dangerous congestion. In winter, we should wear heavy flannels; in autumn and spring, those that are lighter; in summer, a thin, gauze flannel, but some undergarment of this kind should be always worn. The feet should be well protected. Fashion may prescribe thin shoes, but common-sense says, No: shoes must be thick enough to keep out dampness, and the chill of cold pavements. The head needs a screen. Fashion says, Put the bonnet far off from the face, leaving the top of the head and the ears exposed to the heat, light or cold.

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Deafness and weak eyes prevail marvellously, and people complain of their *misfortunes*. Rather, this is their *fault*, because they did not regard their dress in its relationship to health. Clothes should not be too heavy, dragging on back and hips, and producing spinal and other diseases. They should be made of fabrics warm enough without being weighty, and there should not be loaded upon them a mass of trimming, which wearies the wearer more than to do a day's work. The weight of the clothes should be borne by the shoulders, which in their formation are fitted to sustain burdens, and will not be harmed by a reasonable amount. Our dress should be more plentiful out-of-doors than in-doors, and when riding than when walking. The throat should be protected in cold, damp or windy weather. Some seasons fashion allows a throat to be dressed high, and other seasons demands that it should be open and exposed to all inclemency of the temperature. But the throat does not vary with these changes, and needs as much protection at one time as at another. In-doors, too, in stormy, penetrating weather, we should add to our clothes. It is idle to say 'it looks foolish' to get an extra wrap on a day when we do not feel comfortably warm: it looks wise to preserve as far as possible an even temperature. The fashions for children vary in a way reckless of infantile life. One while, they wear reasonable stockings, high over the knees, and dresses up to the throats, and sleeves down to the wrists, and high boots; then, with chests, and legs, and necks well covered, they are comfortable, and their health is in a large measure secured. At other times, bare legs, necks and arms are the style, and the little unfortunates shiver into croup and scarlet fever. Dress your children warmly and healthfully, no matter what fashion says. Even in summer do not expose bare necks and arms to evening air. Also, keep a pair of long, woollen stockings on hand, so that if a cold comes to them in summer, or they are attacked

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with any disease of the stomach, or anything akin to cholera morbus, the woollen stockings may at once be put on. Dress should never compress the part of the body it covers: tight arm-holes, tight boots, tight waists, tight bands and belts are all injurious. They hinder the free circulation of blood, the action of heart, lungs and digestive organs; cause headaches, dyspepsia, lung diseases and other complaints. Let any person, who has worn tight clothing, put on for a week loose but well-supported clothes, not garments which slip about and feel as if they would drop off, and as soon as the first discomfort of change is gone, the relief from pressure will be so marked and delightful as to assure one of its usefulness. When you intend to buy, or have made, any article of dress, ask yourself whether it is suitable for its purpose in covering, whether in lightness and easiness of fit it will avoid all compression or dragging of the muscles, whether it will be warm enough for the season and place where it is to be worn."

Mary Watkins had not come with my nieces that day, but she heard from them something of the talk; and as I was visiting her within a week or two, she told me she would be glad to have me give her my views of dress, as it regarded honesty.

"Our honesty," I said, "concerns our dealings with God and with our fellow-men. We owe God a part of our substance, however little we have, we owe a part of that little to God. Among the Hebrews poverty did not exempt from offering sacrifice; but it regulated the value of the sacrifice: the prince could offer a bullock, the poor woman a young pigeon. We give according to our ability, but we must give something. This is a duty; we should also feel it to be a privilege. Therefore the first proposition concerning dress as it regards honesty will be, that we must not spend so much in proportion to our means, on our dress, that we cannot give something to the

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CHILDREN AND GEESE.

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service of God. Honesty to our fellow-creatures in our dress demands first that we shall not dress better than we can afford, so that we shall be in debt for our dress. What right have I to wear a velvet cloak at the expense of the storekeeper for material, and the dressmaker for making it? I might as well be a beggar out-and-out, and go and ask them to give me a coat; indeed it would be far more honorable to squarely *beg* for it, than to obtain it on false pretences, pretending that I am able to pay for it, and mean to pay for it, when I cannot. Honesty in our dress demands that all that we have in material and making should be paid for promptly, but it requires more than this. If I am possessed of no capital, and am earning three, five, seven hundred dollars a year, I have no right to lay out that much each year. If I spend all that I have, and do not get in debt, I am not dealing really honestly with the community, for every hour I am liable to meet with an accident, to fall ill, to become blind or crippled, and so be a pauper on society, forcing my fellows to take care of me. Even if through all the ordinary working years of my life I am a bread-winner, still age is likely to come; few able-bodied people die in harness, and for age, honesty to our fellows demands that we should make a provision. Therefore, we are not regarding scrupulous honesty in our expenditures when we live up to the limit of our income, without overstepping it, for we are bound in honesty to constantly preserve a margin, to lay up some proper provision, although it may be a slender one, which will provide for us in old age, or in incapability from any cause.

"So you see, Mary, you must, when you consider your dress on the ground of honesty, dress so that you can give something to God's work, so that you can pay for all that you buy, and that you shall not dress so well as to prevent your frugally laying by something for time of need. If people scrupulously regarded honesty in their dress, they would be removed from

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this painful emulation in fashion, which makes so many people miserable. The question with them would be—not what every one has or does, but, 'What is suitable to my own means and position?' People would get on that honorable ground of being laws unto and judges for themselves. The young clerk in a store would not feel that she must dress like the banker's wife who comes to her counter; the young girl in the safe, sensible society of the country, whose walks lie through rural roads, or in quiet village streets, would not feel possessed to get those flaunting styles which some fashion paper declares to her are worn on Broadway or Chestnut street. Let her consider that she is not to appear on those streets; that she fortunately has something to do in this world more than to idle, worry and grow old before her time; that her father's means are represented in land and cattle, and not in bank stock, and that it is not needful for her to spend every cent of her ready money in dress.

"Now, Mary, these sober, common-sense views of what we shall wear are not likely to be assumed in a day when we are grown up; they should grow up with us. If our women are to dress healthfully, honestly, charitably, then our girls must be brought up to have right views of dress, and to think right thoughts about it. Begin with your children, in precept, example, and practice. Don't bring up the little girl to value people for what they have on; to centre all her little thoughts upon clothes; to make dress the staple of her conversation. Let her think with simplicity about dress, and then she will dress with simplicity, and simplicity is a thing beautiful in itself, like clear light. Let your child's dress be so comfortable, so plentiful, so suitable to the time and place and need, so tasteful, and, withal, so plain, that it will seem to her a part of herself, a matter of course, and she will not think of it in fretfulness, or vanity, or over-carefulness, but by the time she has grown up it will have

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become a habit with her to apply her reason, her common-sense, to her dress, and to have it in accordance with the laws of health, honesty and charity. Mothers little think when they lavish, in the hearing of their children, praises on people's clothing, admiration on 'children who are so elegantly dressed,' envious wishes that they could procure thus and so for *their* children, that they are training these children to make of dress and fashion an idol, on the altar of which they may, in saddest truth, offer themselves in sacrifice."

Belinda Black had come in to see Mary while we were talking, and had taken her place beside me. She cried: "Still this vexed question of dress; what a worry it is! Don't you think it is a pity that there are not some laws to govern it—state laws, say, and then we would all know just what we could and should wear, and if we put on a thing, we should not be accused of extravagance, nor if we left it off, of penuriousness. Suppose, for instance, the law was that where people had a thousand a year, they might have such and such things, and where they had two, five, ten, twenty thousand, such other things. There is something like that in my Telèmaque, where Mentor at Salente has the citizens divided up in orders, each order to wear such and such texture and color of clothes. What a saving of worry!"

"I told you lately," I said, "that legislators had passed laws about dress. You have reverted to the ancient idea of sumptuary laws, such as were passed by Henry VII., Henry VIII., and other sovereigns, ordaining whether a man's coat was to be taffetas or velvet or woollen; how many gowns, and of what material, his wife was to possess; how many leathern breeches were lawful to him, and how long might be the toes of his boots, with other rules relating to his household expenses. These laws fitted rather the childhood and youth of the race than its sober maturity; we cannot make laws to fit the thousand and

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one causes and exceptions of our lives, but we can find governing principles whereby we are bound to try and guide our ways."

My next conversation on dress was with Miriam. She said to me:

"Aunt Sophronia, is not the question of beauty to be largely considered in regard to *dress?* Ought we not to cultivate *beauty* in our apparel?"

"Certainly we ought," I replied. "It is important indeed."

"Then, where in your argument of dress, under the heads of health, honesty and charity, does beauty find its place?"

"Under the head of *charity*," I replied, promptly; "we owe it to charity to be all of us as beautiful and look as beautiful as we can."

"Let me hear something, then, if you please, of the way in which you would reason of dress as it regards charity."

"There is no person," I said, "without some ideas of beauty and fitness. All eyes rest with comfortable approbation on the neat, graceful and harmonious. They may be pleased without knowing why, but they are pleased none the less. The little child's face lights up at sight of the ribbon-knot at its mother's throat and the flower in her hair. The little boy's first knightly gallantry awakens in his satisfaction at his little sister, fresh, clean, smiling, though her tiny gown may be only of the poet's 'sprinkled pink;' and in viewing his mother neat and tasteful in her work, though the hair may have no ornament but its own shining smoothness, and the gown may be a cheap calico, if only the colors are in good taste, if fit and fashion are good, if collar and knot relieve the throat. The husband, weary from work in field, or office, or store, comes to his home, and sudden rest falls on him like a mantle, when he sees by a neat hearth children with smooth heads and clean pinafores, and the wife, who has not forgotten the pretty wiles of dress wherewith she

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first pleased his eye. If the lover has a pleasure in seeing shining teeth, well-dressed hair, neat hands, a well-shod foot, a throat tastefully arranged, has the husband necessarily so deteriorated that he will care for none of these things? We owe it of dear charity to the taste of our households, that when we dress in the morning we shall put our clothes on neatly, and make our persons acceptable to the eye, that when we come to the table, from whatever work, we shall come clean and respectable; not with sleeves rolled up, gown open at the throat, and dirty apron. Cousin Ann has always had plenty of work to do and often hard work, but she always kept her hair and feet neat, a clean collar on, and a white apron, and a knot of ribbon on hand in a table-drawer, to slip on before sitting down at a meal, or meeting a guest. We owe it to this family charity not to sit on Sabbath, between services, arrayed in a frayed wrapper and ragged slippers, on the plea that 'we are tired and nobody coming:' we shall be no more tired if we are decent. Indeed, when very tired, a change of clothes and a bath are very resting; and we should always feel that our charity in dress begins at home, and dress as suitably and tastefully as we can for the family satisfaction. This is an example that mothers owe to daughters, and mistresses to maids; a courtesy due to husbands, fathers, sons, brothers. Pursuing this charity of decency in our dress, we should beware of getting gaudy, tawdry, slazy goods for clothing—things which will be soon frayed, spotted, faded, and make us deplorable spectacles as we are 'wearing them out.' It is better to have few clothes than very many—few, but enough for all needs; having many dresses, they become old-fashioned, and we are encumbered with a quantity of half-worn things. Let us be careful in keeping our clothes well repaired, renewing them in style and trimming, so that they will look decent as long as we wear them. A good, substantial article can be used respectably as long as it lasts, and

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will pay for making over. Let us consider that it is a true charity to gratify good taste, and there are certain almost universal laws of taste which we can gratify in our dress without extravagance, or over-devotion of time and labor to the subject. In buying our clothes we should buy what is becoming in color, pattern and style. A large woman, or a very tiny woman, looks absurd in thick, rough, heavy cloths, which need a tall and moderately slender figure to carry them well. A little lady looks pretty in delicately sprigged or spotted lawns and linens, wherein a big lady becomes a dowdy. A tall woman can wear plaids and flounces: they reduce her apparent size and become her well, while they give the little woman the shape of a butter-tub. Short, thick women look ill in shawls, and stout women should not venture on wearing furs. A fair woman is lovely in blue, but her dark sister is made ugly by that beautiful color. A big, red, double-chinned face should not wear a small, light, airy, delicate hat, even if such hats 'are all the style:' for the white lace, the dainty, drooping plume, the spray of forget-me-nots, or hyacinths, brings broadly into relief the redness, thickness, or freckles of the skin; the small hat makes the big face still more like a sunflower, or a pumpkin blossom. Let the large face be framed in a hat large enough to become it, wide or high to suit figure and feature; and let the dark, florid face beware of scarlet, pink or blue placed near it; so surrounded by what becomes it, the large face is handsome, matronly, reposeful. Gaudy colors should not be worn in the street. They are ill taste in spite of fashion. The young lady can wear brighter and lighter fabrics than the mature matron. Children should wear small-patterned goods. The prudent housewife, intent on charity to her husband's resources, will buy for herself what can possibly be afterwards tastefully used for her children; for older girls, what may be made over for their juniors. A black silk, a good black alpaca, a brown linen

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and a nice merino, are dresses always safe to buy, suitable to almost any age, to any complexion, and to almost any circumstances.

"Another view which we can take of dress as it regards charity is, that when we go to social gatherings we should consider the circumstances of the host, and of the company which we are likely to meet, so that by a superfluous elegance of dress we shall not make some plainer neighbor feel awkward and ill-dressed. If you send a child, elaborately decorated in silk, embroideries and jewelry, to some child's gathering, where the other little ones are in lawn or linen, you foster pride in your own child, prevent its hearty play and enjoyment, and provoke envy in the others. So in our church, we should take care not to go notably more richly dressed than the other worshippers. Indeed, for church, I admire quiet, neat, simple dress; forsaking the pomps and vanities, the world, the flesh and the devil, and appearing in the Lord's courts laden down with the world's trappings, are hardly consistent. Don't dress a child or young girl so gorgeously that, when she is grown up, all fashion is exhausted for her, and she must weep and perplex herself for more worlds to conquer. For ornaments use many flowers: a spray of leaves or flowers is in order anywhere, from the family breakfast to the evening party. Ribbons of becoming hue, and fresh and unsoiled, are also suitable everywhere, with the calico wrapper or the evening silk. Wear little jewelry; a piling on of gold pins, rings, tinkling bracelets, ponderous chains, is decidedly barbaric taste. Don't wear a watch to do housework. A small bow, a pearl arrow, or other ornament of jet, pearl or shell, is tasteful in the hair. Neither be lavish in small ornaments nor despise them, and by taking care of what you have you will always be able to appear suitably arrayed. Lastly, never get an article too splendid for the rest of your wardrobe."

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CHAPTER XVIII

MISTRESS AND MAID IN THE HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S VIEWS OF OUR DUTIES TO SERVANTS.

THE more that I consider the affairs of Home, the more am I impressed with the importance of the servant's position. How much of our home-order, health, economy, cheerfulness, is dependent upon the domestic! I think the interest, value and duty of this relation are too seldom appreciated, its permanency is undervalued. Not only is our relation to our servants, or our discharge of duty to them, a matter of importance in our own especial households, but it is of moment to society, to the state. In this relation, as in the rearing of our children, the Home reaches beyond itself, and builds or destroys in other homes.

If we take a young girl into our house for a servant, and find her ignorant, careless, untidy, generally the first impulse is to discharge her, and find better help. But stop a moment. Do we not owe this girl something—a debt of our common humanity? Possibly she is an orphan, and has had no one interested to instruct her; or she may have parents and friends who are ignorant and shiftless, products of the lack of training of a former generation, and they have known no good habits to impart to this girl. Suppose we do send her away: who is there upon whom she has a greater claim, who will take up the task that we reject and make this girl a useful woman? If no one does this, what is to be expected? She will be the dirty and wasteful wife of some poor man, confirming him in all his evil

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habits, and bringing into the world a brood of semi-beggars, filthy, ragged and unschooled, to be the criminals and paupers of a generation to come. How much worse is every town for one such degraded family? They are drunkards, thieves, murderers, incendiaries. What will it not cost the public to look after them, from the hour when charity accords to their childhood cold victuals and cast-off clothes, through years of pauperism, tramping, criminal prosecutions, jails, hospitals, the potter's field? Besides this positive loss, there will be the negative loss. How much better might not the state have been for these half-dozen sturdy rascals, if they had grown into intelligent citizens, law-abiding heads of families, taxpayers, soil-cultivators, mechanics, inventors? We who, from indolence or vexation, fail to take the part of making a young woman what she should be, if there is in herself any quality to second our efforts—a quality which we can elicit by persevering, kindly care—are neither doing our part in the world as good citizens, nor as good Christians.

Again, we often have in our houses girls who are pretty good workers, cleanly, pleasant; they suit us very well, and we keep them: but while they are *in* our family they are not *of* it; we do not interest ourselves in them; we give them no friendly counsel; we do not look forward to their future, and help them to provide for it; they are lonely in our houses—that tie of home and friendly interest which every woman craves is lacking to them. Our daughters, young friends, and relatives, who are in themselves better instructed by reading, example, and observation, we carefully prepare for their future home-life, guard their acquaintanceships, are anxious lest they marry too hastily, or throw themselves away; but we do not think of these things for our maid. So presently, left unwarned and uncounselled, without confidants or guardians, she marries when there are no savings wherewith to start a home; when she has no substantial ward

robe; no little store of bedding, and household linen, and crockery; when she is indeed too young to assume the cares of married life; when the one small room which will be her home is but half-furnished; and so before her will lie a life of poverty, toil, discouragement, children for whom she cannot provide, possibly beggary; and again by our negligence the home, which might be a blessing and a tower of strength, is never built; the town has one less flourishing household, and one more family perpetually on the verge of ruin; the state just so many less efficient citizens. The trouble is that we forget in considering our servants our common womanhood; they are viewed by us as chattels, as animated machines to perform for us such and such offices, and, in regarding them, we forget the human tie, that God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth; that in Christ we and our servants may become kin; that the believing servant may be received by us as Onesimus by Philemon—as a brother beloved.

There are differences, it is true—differences in station, in habits of thought, in associations, in methods of pleasure; these differences are neither for our making nor for our abrogating, nor are they necessarily for discomfort, and regretting on either hand, if each, as mistress and maid, does duty honestly, and cordially respects the position of the other.

I often hear Mrs. Black using the expression, "Nobody but the servants," very much as if she would indicate nobody at all. Now Mrs. Black is not an unkindly woman, but she regards her servants and speaks of them very much as one would of a horse or a cow; she seems entirely to forget a common humanity. I told her once that this struck me painfully; I thought it was unjust to the servant as an individual, unjust to ourselves who had the same organs, emotions, manner of birth, human ties, prospect of death, and possessed immortality; and unjust to God, who made us all of one blood, and in one image—his image, in fact.

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and the image *is His*, whether cast in clay more or less refined, as a statuette might be a copy of the Venus of the Louvre, whether the statuette were moulded in common clay, in ironstone ware, in china, porcelain, or best Sevres.

I said: "Does it make Martha less human, less an individual, to be respected and sympathized with, that the Lord gave her to begin with larger hands, stronger muscles, and more simple tastes and surroundings than mine? so that these largely developed muscles and narrower tastes, united to her sturdy honesty and valiant common-sense, have put her for years in the position of an invaluable maid, to whom I try to be a reasonable and sympathizing mistress."

"It is easy enough for you to talk that way, Miss Sophronia," said Mrs. Black: "everybody knows what a model servant Martha is; if you had *my* servants to deal with, you would change your views, I fancy. Here's Martha—been with you fifteen years or more, and my girls I get so exasperated with that I rush into the kitchen and discharge them about once in six months, and new ones prove no better."

"If I had discharged Martha at the end of six months, she would not have been here for fifteen years," I said. "She was not half as valuable to me the first year as now. Six months is hardly enough to get thoroughly into the ways of a household; certainly not enough to attain a fixed, vital and affectionate interest in it and all its members. These virtues in a domestic are matters of natural growth; they do not spring fully armed out of her head as Minerva from the head of Jove. Do you not think some of the defects which irritate you in your servants might be conquered by your keeping them longer, and educating them in your ways, and also by your feeling more human sympathy with them; showing that interest; trying to interest them in their work and in you; letting them feel as if they had a friend in the house; as if the house was, while they remained

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in it, their home? Perhaps they see that you do not expect them to do very well; that you are on the watch for faults rather than for virtues. Suppose you treat them with confidence and consideration; do not blame them hastily; something that has been done wrong—some breakage, or loss, or careless act—may not be theirs at all, and it will seem hard to them to be regarded as naturally the ill-doers—the black sheep of the household.

"More or less, we must trust our servants; they come into the inner life of the home in such a manner that, by all the members of the family, they must, in a measure, be trusted; it cannot be helped that they shall hear what we say; see what we do; understand our circumstances, our losses, our possessions; suspect many things which perhaps we thought quite out of the range of their knowledge. Now thus placed, no quality in them is more valuable than *trustworthiness*, and there is nothing which more develops this than to be trusted. If we persist in regarding our servants as spies, gossips and foes, it is likely that they will continue spies, gossips and foes to the end of the chapter; more than we fancy, we are able to create that in which we believe. True, believing a servant honest does not always make them so, and very trustful employers have often been egregiously deceived; but we never yet made any one better by believing them to be bad, and good treatment, good example, and good instruction, will go far toward creating for us good servants, even out of originally poor materials."

I have always considered Cousin Ann a model in her management of her servants. I tell her this sometimes, but she says it is much easier to have good servants in the country than in the city. There is less temptation there for them to hurry their work, so that they may run off. They have less intercourse with companions who may be idle and injurious. When their work is done, their time is occupied in reasonable occupations, as reading, and making and mending their clothes; and thus

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gives thoughtfulness and stability to their character, and puts them on the road to thrift and thoroughness. This is doubtless all true. But I have seen excellent servants in the city, and very poor ones in the country, and I believe in the old adage, "A good mistress makes a good maid."

I have, when visiting Cousin Ann, and especially when I passed a winter with her, carefully observed her ways with her servants, and I have arrived at certain rules by which she guides her sway.

First. She intends to respect her servants in their places, and so she clearly gives them to understand that they *must be respectable*. Lying, rudeness, uncleanliness, vulgarity in word or act, are not respectable, and, therefore, the servant must eschew all these.

Second. Cousin Ann sets herself the example of what she would have her servant be. She never deceives nor equivocates. She is never rude nor ungracious in her order or her reproofs. She is exquisitely tidy and orderly. While respecting others, she means herself to be respected. She has a quiet dignity, removed alike from familiarity and from haughtiness. She is calm and kindly.

Third. She makes obedience to her wishes possible. She does not hurry the servant, so that she cannot get tidily through with her work. She does not bid her be cleanly, and so crowd her with labor that there is no time for her to bathe, comb her hair, dress neatly, make, wash and mend her clothes, and set in order her room.

Fourth. She makes her servants feel how important to the well-being of the whole house their good conduct and good work may be. She does not hector them with trivial directions, but she teaches thoroughly and once for all what she wishes done, and she gives them fundamental rules.

Fifth. She remembers that, like other people, her servants are

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imperfect, that human bodies, and minds, and hearts may get out of order. When they are ill, or even a little ailing, she bestows rest, freedom from work, nursing and doctoring, as she would to any other member of the family in proportion to the needs of the case. She does not ask needless questions. She awaits confidence rather than demands it, respecting individual secrets and sorrows. She yields ready sympathy with their troubles, is not easily offended by accidents or by little nervousness; and when the usually kind-tempered, willing servant appears in a new character, as flustered, cross, hasty of speech, she quietly arranges a change of work, a holiday, a little treat of some kind, to relieve the unknown pain lying at the root of this exhibition. I remember once when I was there, Cousin Ann's servant seemed pettish and careless for several days, and finally spoke very impertinently to her mistress. Some ladies would have reproached her, told her that she had been put up with for days, and have then discharged her. Cousin Ann, on the contrary, said, calmly:

"Harriet, you are quite forgetting yourself. You have seemed to feel worried at something for several days. You do not usually act in this manner. Possibly, if you told me what the matter was, I could help you. I should be glad to do so. It is much better to be helped to do right, than to allow ourselves to do wrong."

Harriet sat down and burst into a flood of tears. Having cried for a while she became quieter, and Cousin Ann said, kindly:

"Well, Harriet, what is it?"

Then out came the trouble. Harriet had a lover. She had supposed him to be a decent young man. She had found out that he drank, and had been off on a wild spree. He wanted to be taken into favor. "If I give him the cold shoulder," sobbed Harriet, "he'll go off and marry Mary McMannus. And I do

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care for him, but I'm afraid of drunkards! Didn't my own father drink, and break my mother's heart, and chase me out in the snow, until it was well for us that he died? But, oh, what will I do, disappointed as I am?"

Only a servant girl's little love-story and bitter disappointment; possibly some would have passed it by carelessly.

Cousin Ann sat down by her maid and said, in true sympathy: "Harriet, I am *very* sorry for you, and I will advise you as I would my daughter. Don't marry a man who drinks. If he does not love you well enough to reform for the sake of securing you, he will not love you well enough to be kind, nor to provide for you, nor for your children. It is hard to be disappointed in a lover, but much harder to be disappointed in a husband. How would you repent marrying a drunkard, if you found yourself a beggar, perhaps maimed by him in some drunken row, or saw little children starved, beaten or driven out into the cold night! Be brave, Harriet, to do what is right! Now you can be self-supporting, safe and respectable. If you married a drunkard, nothing would be left you but misery and regret. Now, Harriet, you are tired and excited with your trouble and crying: suppose you go to your room and lie down a while. And on the table in my room there is a little red book which I will give you, and I wish you would get it as you go by, and read it through before you make up your mind on this matter."

This little book, as I learned, was a story of a girl who married a drunkard.

Cousin Ann's womanly kindness not only saved her a good servant, for Harriet lived with her for four years after this, but it saved Harriet to herself. Her lover did not reform. She discarded him. A miserable sot, he is now in jail for arson; while Harriet has married a very good man who works for Reed, and has as nice a home and two as pretty children as are to be seen anywhere.

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A sixth rule with Cousin Ann is to require obedience to her orders, and an adherence to her plans and wishes in her house. She holds the reins and guides her household, and allows no contravening of her plans. She does not permit negligence to pass unrebuked, or, finding a thing ill done, do it herself, and so confirm in her maid the careless habit. When a fault is committed, she is prompt on the spot to set it right. She does not wait a week and then cast it up.

These rules of Cousin Ann's I have tried to impress upon my young friends for their guidance in managing their servants. I remember, when Miriam first hired a grown servant, she came to me in a great deal of perplexity. For two years Miriam did her own work; then she took little Ann from me, Martha's niece, who had become a very useful maid, and a year and a half later she hired a grown girl. She came to consult me, saying:

"Aunt, I don't want to have trouble with my servants, and this perpetual changing. How shall I manage them? Mrs. Black has just been warning me that I must not allow any visitors."

"What are you going to hire," I asked—"a machine or a human being?"

"Why, a very respectable young woman," said Miriam.

"And where is the respectable young woman," I said, "who was made without a heart or capacity for friendship? If she is a good young woman, she will have friends of some kind to love; because people are servants they are not made without parents, sisters, aunts, or other relatives to care for. They have their little interests: they want to know how the neighbor's sick baby is, and what new dresses the cousin, who is to be married, is making, and if the little nephew looks well in his first trowsers, and whether the grandmother's rheumatism is better. It is barbarity to take a young woman into your house to work, yourself meanwhile not expecting to be her companion, and

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IN DISTRESS.

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then saying to her: 'I do not approve of servants having friends.'"

"What shall I do? That does seem cruel, but Mrs. Black says if I am not careful that my kitchen will be full of visitors, that the work will be neglected for gossip, that there will be diseases brought to the children, that the visitors will be constantly taking meals and carrying off things. You know, aunt, I do not want to be stingy, but I must economize, and I cannot allow waste."

"That is all true, my dear, but there is a happy mean in all things. You expect to give your servant a part of Sunday, and a part of Thursday afternoon, unless something unforeseen interferes now and then with this liberty. Thus she will have twice a week to see her friends. She will have occasional evenings out. When you engage the girl, tell her strictly and clearly at what hour you wish her to return on these occasions, and tell her this hour must not be overstepped. Tell her that you do not like much company, nor company during working hours; but that she is welcome to see her relatives and nice quiet friends at proper times, if they leave at the hour which you set for closing your house, and there are not too many at once, or those who are noisy. Tell her, also, that you will rely on her to see only those friends of whom her near relatives and her conscience will approve. You can then kindly notice how matters go, and see that your rules are obeyed. Don't establish unnatural conditions and needless restrictions: they force people toward deceit and disobedience."

"That calls up another question. Mrs. Smalley visited me yesterday, and she warned me solemnly not to allow any '*followers*:' she said it was *positively ruinous*."

"What is a follower? Pray tell me."

"Why, she meant a lover, a young man paying attention to her, I suppose," said Miriam, laughing.

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"Mrs. Smalley allowed her own daughter a follower; is the servant-maid above or beneath such an adherent? The servant girls marry, Miriam, just as frequently as their young mistresses. Indeed, I think there are fewer unmarried women among the working classes than among those a little better off. The maid has a heart, the natural affections of a young woman; she likes to be admired, to think that there is some one who esteems her above all the world. For fear of losing her place and her means of livelihood, she may agree to have no 'follower,' but she will have one none the less. Prohibited receiving him in her neat, warm, well-lighted kitchen, in the protection and respectability of the household, she will hang over the back-gate, hide in an area, make an appointment at a street-corner, or at some not first-class eating-house. A *young lady* who did this would be condemned at once and lose her credit; is it any less dangerous for the servant-woman to put herself in such a position? Mistresses who claim to be *very particular*, perhaps even by thus being *unjustly* particular, are often responsible for the ruined life and character of some servant, whom their womanly sympathy and guardianship might have saved to be a happy wife and a good mother. The compliments which your servant appreciates, the little gifts which she accepts, the amusements to which she is escorted, are not those which would suit your taste; but so long as they are decent and honest, we have, underlying all, the common womanhood, the common sentiments and instincts God implanted, and those we should recognize and respect in our treatment of her."

"Then I *had* better allow a follower?" laughed Miriam.

"You can tell your new maid frankly, that you do not think it suitable for any young woman to have the calls of a promiscuous troop of young men; you should not allow your own daughter, if she were grown, liberty for anything of this kind; neither do you approve of a young man coming every evening,

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or staying late; if she has any particular friend, approved by her relatives, and of such character as could frankly come to a gentleman's house, then she can receive him, and you will trust her to treat you openly and honorably in regard to him. It will not be hard for Mark to find out something of the real character of this friend; if it is vicious, you cannot allow him to come to your house; you owe it to yourself and to your maid to forbid him the premises, and to warn her of her danger in the acquaintance. You are the girl's God-ordained guardian while she is with you. If her friend is of the right sort, try, by the advice which you occasionally drop, and by the reading which you put in her way, to give her a sense of her duty: of the need of thrift and careful preparation for married life."

"Why," said Miriam, looking very grave, "this hiring a maid means then a good deal more than simply to get some one to wash dishes, bake, iron, sweep and dust."

"Indeed it does," I rejoined; "it is taking into your family band another pilgrim bound for eternity; here is another human soul come into your keeping; not white and unwritten like the soul of the little child, all open to your inscribing, but much of false teaching and evil habits, of preconceived notions, of fixed opinions, may be there to combat your efforts to lead them in the right way."

"What a responsibility!" cried Miriam; "but give me one or two plain and simple rules, so that I may feel, resting on them, that I have some solid ground beneath my feet. I want some starting-point for my new work."

"I give you the same which possibly I have given you in regard to children—for in many respects our servants come to us on the plane of children. Have laws like those of the Medes and Persians—unalterable laws, so that they shall know what to depend upon; and have privileges like an Englishman's house, which is his inviolate castle. Don't let servants think that you

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do not mean the thing which you say, either in your own behalf or in theirs. When you promise them a favor, keep your promise; respect their privileges; be cordial in giving them their holiday afternoons; all work, unrelieved by amusement, makes any one dull and listless; it is bad for morals, health, and for brains; uninterrupted work is intolerable: it comes at last to torture us, like that famous dropping of water. I have known a maid so heartless, that after two years of service, where she was kindly treated, she coolly walked off to take her Thursday half-holiday, asking no questions, making no apologies, and leaving her mistress bending over the bed of a dying child. That was one instance of brutality. I have known many instances where the servant voluntarily and cheerfully changed her afternoon out, or gave it up entirely because of guests, or sickness, or because of some work which she saw it would be a pleasure to her mistress to have out of the way. Where there is kind consideration shown on the one hand, it is usually reciprocated on the other, and in virtue of her position the mistress must take the initiative in this interchange of good offices."

It is a cardinal point in the creed of some persons that servants are a trial and a nuisance, and that it is a great cross to be obliged to keep them. This is a false idea. To take service is, and always must be, one of the ways in which a large number of human beings get their living; other human beings who have house-room, money, and work, must then take these people in; this is one of *their* duties to the world at large, and one of the things which the Lord set for them to do, in the way of providing for their fellows, as he provides for them.

I think the next person with whom I conversed on this subject was Mary Watkins. She came to me one day saying that she had made arrangements to take a girl of fifteen from a city institution, and keep her until she was twenty-one.

Said Mary: "I hope she will be a good girl to me, and I want

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to be a good mistress to her. I should be sorry if she finished her stay with me without being in every way better for it; what main methods shall I take for her improvement? You know I have very little experience with servants, for hitherto I have had none but a little ten-year-old from the village, and my mother did not keep help after I was twelve years old."

"The foundation, Mary," I replied, "of good character and efficiency in service lies in sound religious principle; this stimulates zeal, unselfishness, honesty that is above eye-service; it furnishes something in the servant to be relied upon. We should give our servants all the religious help possible. A Bible should always be furnished for the servant's room; the work should be managed so that she can go to church at least once weekly; she should always be at family prayers. If you see her indulging in unchristian conduct, give a Christian admonition; endeavor to furnish good reading for her leisure hours on Sabbath; do not expect the maid to enjoy a volume of sermons, nor Baxter's 'Saincs' Rest;' the young, robust, and partially educated, do not take to writing of this kind, but they will enjoy 'Pilgrims' Progress,' a religious magazine, a church paper, the 'Tales of the Covenanters' or of the Waldensians. Show your friendly interest in your maid by giving her a decent room. Don't give a mass of ragged bed-clothes, a poor tick and pillow, and begrudge a clean sheet and pillow-case each week. Don't ask her to be neat, and then give her no appliances for her toilette, so that she must wash and comb in the kitchen. Put a bowl, pitcher and comb-case in her room; a chair; a stand for her light and books; a pincushion; at least one strip of carpet by the bed; put up hooks for her clothes, and do not deny her the decency of a curtain to the window; if you can spare her a little bureau, or a chest of drawers, so much the better, and a shoe-box. Her room thus tidy and well equipped when she goes into it, you can impress upon her the need of keeping it as

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nice as any part of the house; and where there is any neglect, remark upon it immediately.

"Girls who have a comfortable room furnished them generally appreciate it. I remember a girl coming to Mrs. Burr and being sent up to her tidy room, where there was, among other things, an illuminated text on the wall, and a pot of flowers in the window. She came straight down before laying off her bonnet, and said, with tears in her eyes, 'I came to thank you for such a nice room. It looks just as if you wanted to make me comfortable and self-respecting, and I shall try to do my very best for you.'

"Be careful, also, and treat your servant kindly, while you do not forget or fail in your own position. Don't think because you have a *right* to command that it is best to be forever issuing orders; there is no law against your *uttering requests.* Another important point is—not only for the good of the servants, but of your children—see to it that the children treat your hired help with courtesy. Teach them to say 'please' and 'thank you.' See to it that they do not wantonly make work, and that they heed requests and remonstrances, and do not allow them to hinder the girl when she is busy. I have seen children so shamefully ill-bred, that they would come in when a girl had just finished a weary scrubbing of a floor, and tramp about on the wet wood with dirty feet, just for the sake of soiling it, or throw mud on a newly cleaned window, or slop water over a stove or table, merely to vex the doer of this hard cleaning work. Do what you can to lighten work: not in the way of allowing neglect, for that never really makes anything easier, but by furnishing any possible appliances to make the work easier. If you can afford a clothes-wringer, and a box-line protector for the clothes-line, and a drain for suds opening near the washtubs, have these things to lighten toil. Have posts set firmly for your clothes-lines, with bars or hooks for

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fastening the line; for what is more vexing or exhausting than to spend a long time in sun, frost or wind trying to tie up a line for which no proper provision has been made, or, after all one's tedious efforts, to have the clothes tumble down in the dirt, and all needing to be rinsed over again?

"Try to set your maid a good example, and give her good advice in matters personal to herself. Teach her how to make, mend and cut out clothes: what a blessing and saving this knowledge will be in her future home! Do not set her an example of untidiness by sending ragged clothes into the wash, and letting her see *you* using things that need mending. Let her realize that you think it a positive duty to darn your stockings, mend all your clothes neatly, and turn all that you have to the best use.

"I commended a poor woman once for being a nice housekeeper, and said: 'You seem to have some witchcraft in making things last long.'

"She answered: 'It is all owing to a good example that I had when living out. My mistress never let anything go to waste. When the sheets began to wear, they were turned; as needed, they were darned and patched; and when large sheets gave out, they were made over into narrow ones for single beds. Table-cloths were darned in every little break, and when too much worn for the table, they were cut into towels and fringed or hemmed for use over bread, pies, cake and so on, in pantry and cellar. The pillow-cases were darned neatly where they cracked; so were towels; and old towels were doubled and sewed into neat wash-cloths. An old crumb-cloth, long darned and mended, when finally worn out, made us first-rate kitchen-towels. Nothing was wasted or neglected. As with the house-linen, so with the family clothes. You should have seen the neat mending; the fine darns in stockings and handkerchiefs: the rough edges of petticoats turned in and over-sewn; the

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worn edges of collars and cuffs trimmed with a ruffle of lace. I learned there that things take a long while to wear out: they go from use to use for years.'

"Now this woman on very narrow means was rearing a family of children in decency, and making her little girls as wise and thrifty as herself. How far had the example of that faithful housekeeper extended for good! And, finally, for I am talking altogether too long, and telling you more than you are likely to remember, govern your own conduct to your servants by principle, and they will be influenced by your example to be well principled in their conduct to you. Nothing is so potent as good example in securing respect and imitation. Don't lose your temper; reprove with firmness, calmness and moderation."

When Sara set up housekeeping, her mother-in-law, Mrs. Winton, gave her some good counsel about her maids. She said:

"Let them look for your coming where they work as an *encouragement*, because you will help them to see their work more clearly, and you will be able to suggest good methods for doing it well and quickly. Let them expect your presence as an *incentive*, because you will kindly commend what is good. The kitchen-maid has been scrubbing, polishing, window-washing, until she is really tired and uncomfortable. You come in and remark: 'Ah, it is a pleasure to come into such a neat kitchen as this.' You happen to go to the tin-closet, orderly and shining; you remark: 'This closet is a treat to look at: it does you great credit.' The girl is saving. She tries out, clarifies and strains drippings; saves bread-crumbs for dressing cutlets or fish; makes a nice white bone-soup; takes pains with your property as if she had herself paid for it; and you say: 'I am pleased that you are so thrifty: it is useful to me, and will be very useful to you. The young man who secures such a wife will be fortunate.' Now these commendations go a great

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ways: they pay for over-weariness. The maid feels rested and refreshed by a good word, and is stirred to go on to better and better things. Again, the servant should look for your presence as a *warning* against carelessness. Don't go into a kitchen, find things going wrong, and, sighing hopelessly, retreat discouraged. You go into the kitchen and see that after breakfast the dish-towels were not washed; the sink has been wiped out, but is not really clean; there is dust left in the corners; the hearth is untidy; the broom stands on the brush and not on the handle. Speak promptly to the point.

"'Catherine! see how you have left your broom; hang it up when you are done with it; but *now*, before hanging it up, take it and sweep your kitchen nicely—see the dust left in these corners. I see you have forgotten my rule about washing these towels; now I shall put them into this pan, and put hot water and soft soap on them; as soon as the kitchen is swept, wash these towels well and hang them up; then add some sal-soda to the suds left and scrub out this sink carefully; if you rub your finger on the inside you will see that it is greasy. Never think, Catherine, that time or strength are saved by carelessness. I hope I shall not see this neglect again.' Let the servants feel that your quick eye will note every omission, and that you will not fear to correct it."

One day, when we were visiting Hester, she said to Mrs. Winton: "Why are servants so poor and so much complained of now-a-days? The race of reliable maids seems dying out. I have excellent servants, but most people complain."

"The reason is," replied Mrs. Winton, "First, that of late young women have grown up in ignorance of housekeeping, and do not understand how to manage either house or maid: poor mistresses make poor maids.

"Second. It has become the fashion to complain of the hired help; mistresses have fallen into a habit of exaggerating faults

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and making themselves out to be martyrs: little comes whence little is expected.

"Third. We have fallen into an emulous habit of keeping too many servants; several maids, none of whom have full occupation, quarrel, neglect their work, assigning it to others, and realize the proverb that Satan finds mischief for idle hands. Better to have too few servants than too many; don't call in extra help because the neighbors have more maids than you, but because you absolutely need more help. A friend of mine with a large family, finding that with four servants her work was never done, and could not get done, instead of hiring a fifth, discharged one of those which she had, and remarked that then if the work were not properly done she would try keeping but two servants; there was no more trouble, the work was done on time, well done, and no one was overtaxed.

"The fourth reason for our poor servants is, that they are discharged on small pretexts; one does not try to mend matters by keeping and teaching them, but by dismissing them. They half learn the ways of a dozen or a score of families, but never wholly master those of one. Families go into the country or to the coast for six months, or four months, and turn off the help, or some of them, and expect the next fall and winter to hire others who will look to a similarly short term of service. Who can expect good help in such circumstances?

"Fifth. We have poor servants because we hire them too hastily; we do not scrutinize their antecedents and characters, and we are not particular enough to tell them exactly our rules.

"Sixth. We are often too indolent to have household laws, or if we have them to execute them. Our domestic judiciary and executive are both weak and insufficient. If we would only say what we mean, and mean what we say, our servants would obey better.

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"The seventh reason for our having poor servants is, that we do not realize the blessing and comfort there is in good ones; we say we like a good cook, a nurse who keeps the children clean and quiet, a housemaid who dusts thoroughly, soaks her brooms once a month in boiling suds, hangs them up when she has finished using them, and sweeps with a long, even stroke, keeping her broom to the floor, and not flinging the dust into the air; but we mention our liking these good qualities much as we say we like a horse that does not shy, a cow that does not kick, a chicken which is fat and tender. We do not comprehend that this servant may be in sorrow a self-forgetting sympathizer; in sickness a devoted nurse; in losses a staunch adherent; that her devotion being deserved may become as intense as that of our nearest relations, that she may serve our children with almost maternal self-abnegation."

If there is any one who can appreciate these remarks about a faithful domestic, I think I should be able to. Martha has for years been with me, devoted to my interests, regarding all my joys and sorrows as her own. She takes the greatest pride in my nieces' children, and is constantly thinking of some way in which she can benefit them or their mothers. When Miriam has had sickness in her family, or her servant has been obliged to be absent for a day, Martha has risen early and retired late, that she might not only do my work, but bake, or iron, or cook for Miriam. All that Hannah has of efficiency as a servant she owes to Martha, who took her in hand, taught her, instructed her to consider Helen's interests as her own, helped her, persuaded her to remain in her place and not run from family to family; and really Hannah is now a very good maid, and a great blessing to Helen, who could hardly get on without her.

Martha, besides having good habits, a good heart, an honest conscience and a readiness to learn, has also good brains, and she invents things for herself; meanwhile, she reads and remem-

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bers. She has culled recipes and hints about housekeeping from numerous papers and books, and has pasted them in several scrap-books, which she kept in the kitchen on the shelf with her Bible, her hymn-book, and perhaps some other book which she was reading. Seeing her interest in these things, and anxious to gratify her, I went to Mr. Smalley, and had him make me four little book-shelves, swung on a stout cord: they were made of white wood, and stained dark. These I hung up in the kitchen between the windows, and then I carried in and placed on them various books which I have on house-work, cooking and the like—"Mrs. Glasse's Cookery," good if old, "The British Housewife," "Blot's Lectures," and a number of others. Martha was highly gratified by this attention, and I often find her, when her work is done, poring over these volumes. I have frequently given Martha books—religious books —a story or two, and once I took a magazine for her for a year or two. It was not exactly such a magazine as I would have preferred for myself, but it was simple and varied in contents, and suited Martha so well that she had the numbers bound.

I have found the good of Martha's brains in various little contrivances. One year I thought our well-water was not very good, and I meant to have a new well dug. I said I must get meanwhile a filter; there was none in the village, and before I could send to town, Martha made a filter. She bought a very large common red earthen flower-pot, with a hole in the bottom. She set this in the top of the water-cooler, where it just fitted when the lid was taken off; she put in the flower-pot, first, a layer of nice brook-pebbles, then a layer of sand from the brook, then one of charcoal, broken pretty small: she repeated these layers until they filled the pot. Then on the pot she set a water-bucket, with a small augur hole bored in the bottom; in the pail she poured the water for filtering: it percolated the various layers in the flower-pot, entering the cooler pure, as it

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it had passed through the best patent filter. Mary Watkins was much pleased with this piece of ingenuity. She said: "If I only had a cooler, I would arrange a filter in that way, for our well-water is poor."

Martha's ingenuity extended over Mary's case. She said: "Except for a little trouble in lifting when you want a pitcher of water, Mrs. Watkins, you can do just as well, if you set the flower-pot in the neck of a four or six gallon stone-jar; and if you pin around that a piece of an old blanket, or several thicknesses of crash towel, and keep that wet, the water will be nearly as cool as ice-water."

Another time I went into the kitchen, and found Martha surveying, with much pleasure, several rhubarb pies and a dish of green currant sauce. She said, with an air of triumph: "Ah! I've got the better of the sour things this time!"

"How is that, Martha?" I asked; "did you put in extra sugar?"

"No, indeed, ma'am; they've always used too much sugar for my fancy. No; I'll tell you what I did: I put the fruit to stew, and when it was half done I put in each pot a small, even teaspoon of carbonate of soda (baking soda), and that, ma'am, somehow ate up the sourness of the fruit, so it wasn't much more sour than dried peaches, or black cherries, or blackberries, and I've saved about half the usual sugar, and I've got a pie that tastes fairly elegant—indeed it do."

"Why, Martha," I said, "you are quite a chemist."

"La, ma'am, I saw how to do it in a book, and so I tried, and it's turned out quite beyond my expectations."

"As you have been so saving, you had better carry one of those pies to your sister-in-law for her Sunday dinner, and tell her of your new way of sparing sugar, and it may help her in her housekeeping; we should teach all the economy we learn."

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A servant so faithful and thoughtful, one would say, deserves all the little aids and conveniences that can be given her; I have been careful, since Martha, like myself, is growing elderly, to have a comfortable rocking-chair in the kitchen for her to rest in; and I have placed her in a room over the kitchen where there is a drum from the kitchen stove, so that in cold weather she will be comfortable. Much of Martha's faithful thoughtfulness, however, comes from the instruction and good treatment which she has always received from me; she would say so herself.

As an illustration of the good which one can do to the public at large by faithfully training their servants, I will mention the case of three maiden ladies whom I knew in my youth. In those days we received many Irish emigrants, young girls come over to seek service—"raw Irish" they were called, and indeed they were very raw. Wages were then very low; a dollar or a dollar and a quarter a week was a large price in the towns, and in the city a dollar fifty and a dollar seventy-five was handsome while two dollars was enormous pay. In the small towns wages sank below a dollar to seventy-five, fifty, forty, even twenty-five cents for "the raw Irish." In those days dry-goods were low, and eight yards of calico made a maid a decent frock! These ladies of whom I speak were admirable housekeepers; being in narrow circumstances, they could not afford to give the wages of a skilled servant, besides they felt that they had a duty to the strangers on our shores, and that one of their modest ways of doing good might be to take some of these emigrants and make them useful women. Accordingly, they always took a new Irish girl; she could not be so ignorant as to damp their zeal. They taught her personal neatness; saw to it that she bathed, combed her hair, and cleaned her teeth; they taught her to mend her clothes, put in order all that she brought with her, which was little; and though they gave but thirty-seven cents

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in wages, they were able, among the three, to provide her many good garments by teaching her to make over their own laid-by clothes; they taught her to fit and make her dresses; to make a neat bonnet; on Christmas she got a good new shawl or coat: she was taught to read, and, if she had any aptitude, to write; she was also taught plain cooking, bread-making, housework, laundry work—all of the best variety. No girl left service with them without knowing how to read, sew, and do general housework; then when a year and a half or two years had put her in possession of these arts, the good ladies sought among their friends, who always were eager to get a girl of their training, and found her a place, where she got a dollar or a dollar and a quarter a week, while they took another case of raw help to develop into industrious, capable womanhood. Doubtless they had a score of these girls, some staying less time than the others, all leaving them well equipped for life; and these servants, instead of being shiftless, vicious, dirty pauper-makers, finally settled into decent and thrifty homes of their own. Who can estimate the value of these good ladies to the town in which they lived, to the state, to humanity at large?

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CHAPTER XIX.

HOW TO MAKE HOME HAPPY.

AUNT SOPHRONIA TELLS HOW TO DO IT.

JAMES FREDERICK BLACK is by no means the least promising of our young men. He has been very intimate with the Winton boys; our minister thinks a great deal of him; he is fond of asking deep and far-reaching questions, and he tries to improve; so, in spite of various disadvantages in Home-training, I think James Frederick will turn out very well. I hope so, I'm sure, not only for his own sake, but he is paying attention to Cousin Ann's younger daughter, and I think a great deal of her. Speaking of the questions which James Frederick likes to ask reminds me of one that he put to me recently. Mrs. Burr had a very large gathering at her house celebrating her silver-wedding. She usually invites a number of friends on each of her wedding anniversaries, but on this especial occasion almost every one in our village and in the neighboring country was asked. Of course there was a good deal of talk about family life, home duties and so forth. By-and-by James Frederick and one of the Wintons came to me, and said:

'Aunt Sophronia, you are to tell us how to make Home happy, and give the means of doing so in one word."'

I thought for a minute or two what phrase would cover the most ground, and said: " Good management."

They went off to a group of young people, apparently to report my answer, and James Frederick returned. saying,

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"That word would include a great deal, would it not?"

"Certainly," I replied; "the good management must extend to health, finances, order, the training of children, our social duties, the making the best of our possessions, so that we shall secure from them the largest amount of comfort. You may have in your pantry, or on a table, all the component parts of a pound-cake, but unless they are judiciously put together you will have no cake. So you may have this, that and the other element of happy home making, but unless they are wisely brought together and blended you will not have a happy home."

"Homes where all these elements are so nicely blended," said James Frederick, "are so few, that I fear some great exceptional, overpowering genius, some Michael Angelo of the Home, is needed for the infinitely varied task."

"No, James Frederick; it is merely conscientious perseverance in little things which is demanded. It has been well said that 'To do common things perfectly is far better worth our endeavor than to do uncommon things respectably.'"

About a week after this Martha suggested that Miriam had desired me to spend the afternoon with her. She artfully contrived that I should wear my best gown and head-gear. About half-past six Martha came after me, saying that a friend wanted me. I went home and found my house warmed and lighted from top to bottom, and I caught sight of the dining-table, drawn to its fullest length, with all my silver displayed, and a great pyramid of fancy cakes and macaroons, for which Martha is famous. The Blacks and Hester were in the parlor. I saw that Martha had joined a surprise-party conspiracy. Presently other guests came until there were about twenty-five young people, and James Frederick informed me that they had come expressly to hear me expound *how to make Home happy.* No other conversation was to be allowed. The young ladies had

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brought baskets of their best culinary samples, to prove that, as far as cooking went, they could make home very happy indeed. In an instant the chairs were drawn around me in a double circle.

"Begin," cried Dick, autocratically.

"Where shall I begin? You have taken me so by surprise, that I begin to feel as if I never so much as heard of the institution called Home, nor how it could be made happy."

"Give us some hints about buying furniture and putting it in a house," said James Frederick, saucily, whipping out his note-book. "I'm going to buy some soon, and I want to know."

Cousin Ann's daughter grew very rosy, and hid behind her sister, Sara Winton.

"Well," I said, "if a heterogeneous mass of hints will be of any use to you, you are welcome to them. You give me no time for better presentation of the subject.

"First, as to providing furniture, be most liberal in providing conveniences for rooms which you will use most. Do not stint the kitchen to trick out the parlor: do not deprive yourself of proper pots and pans, of a good, durable carpet for your bed-room, and a side-table for the dining-room, in order that your parlor may have a great looking-glass. A housewife spends much time in her kitchen: let it be neat, tastefully arranged, provided with conveniences which shall save disorder. Get solid, substantial furniture: don't be deceived by pretty sounding adjectives. It will be no advantage to your dining-table to be light and elegant: it might break down under your first big dinner. Neither should chairs be light and elegant: they might crush like an egg-shell under the first fat man. It is better to get less furniture, but of a good, firm quality, than a deal of flimsy stuff. Do not get showy carvings and colorings, unless expense is of small account to you, and you can change your furnishings frequently: black hair-cloth of good quality, spite of

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all the revilings cast at it, is far better than a cheap red or green reps which will soon fade or crack. If you do not expect to refurnish frequently, avoid getting furniture of odd forms; get plain shapes, not with dozens of curious curves: in a little while the eye wearies of these, the fashion changes, and they are a source of disgust. Get carpets of solid quality, subdued tints, small patterns, that are like known things: only a Turkish carpet can venture to lead the mind into the weary mazes of a crazy man's dream of things unknown to creation. Remember and not crowd your house over-full at first: there is use and pleasure in buying things as a need for them develops: the eye is refreshed by a new picture on the wall, and a new rug, ottoman or stand, put just where a lack had seemed to be. For woods, in a parlor or handsomely furnished bed-room, you are always safe in getting a good oiled walnut; for bed-rooms where you desire to avoid expense, cottage sets of painted bass wood are neat, pretty and enduring; for a dining-room, oak, and it pays to get oak chairs seated with maroon leather. Don't forget when you are buying a table that it is for use; that a chair is to sit in, and so should be comfortable; that a bureau is for use, and that its drawers should be strong, with good locks, opening and shutting easily, and deep. Let there be harmony in your furniture: don't get one fine and huge article which will stare all the rest of your simple surroundings out of countenance; a fine, carved, tall, marble-topped buffet would look ill-placed in a small dining-room, with an old-fashioned, leaved table, and thin-legged, cane-seat chairs. When you are furnishing, from the beginning, any room, consider harmony: get a carpet, a wall-paper, and furniture, which harmonize; don't have a wall-paper in pink flowers, a bright red carpet, and a cottage suite in light blue. When you add furniture to rooms already partly fitted out, get what harmonizes with the rest, and supplies a felt need. When you put your furniture in your rooms, let the

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rooms mean something; don't let them have a dreary, soulless look, as if human emotions had nothing to do with producing them, and they had been set in shape by machinery. Group your furniture comfortably; put chairs, stands, books, pictures, where people would naturally use them. Study artistic effect: this study increases the beauty of present possessions, and trains the taste of the family. A gentleman paid his wife a grand compliment, when, looking into the pretentiously dreary quarters assigned him as a government officer, he remarked: 'Well, it *does* look frightfully, but it will be all right when my wife comes; *she* could create beauty and a home, out of a fragment of the Sahara and a half-dozen newspapers.' Finally, don't crowd your rooms: we all want breathing space."

"Tell us, if you please," said Grace Winton, "some ways in which we can make articles of furniture for ourselves, if we have not much money to lay out in our houses?"

"I suppose you all know," I said, "how to make a chair of a barrel, sawn into shape, and covered with chintz, over stuffing. So also an hour-glass stand is an article often made of two round boards, nailed at either end of a stick two and one-half feet high, and two and one-half inches in either diameter. Let your board-top be as large as you wish your stand; cover first with old muslin, and then with fancy chintz or muslin; furnish the top with a central pin-cushion and a circle of pockets; and tie the draping muslin, at the centre of the support, into the form of an hour-glass. Foot-cushions are pretty, and easily made of patch-work. You can have a lovely bracket by fastening to the wall a board of the right size, and putting on it a cloth cover with a depending edge cut into leaf shapes or triangles, and the whole embroidered with silk in Oriental appliquè: the skirts of a worn-out black or blue coat will furnish you this covering. A dry goods box, some colored cambric and white Swiss, with ribbon, will make a toilette table. A good lounge

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can be made of a frame, a cushion, stuffed with hay or husks, evenly tacked, and the whole nicely covered with chintz, or indeed with calico. Chintz lambrequins are pretty and simple for windows; full curtains of buff, white, gray or pink lawn to suit the general tone of the room are pretty, but not especially cheap. You can make shades by stretching unbleached muslin on a frame, rubbing evenly into it melted beeswax and rosin, and when that is dry, putting on a coat of paint and one of varnish. However, the only curtain cheaper than bought shades—and a pretty curtain it is—is made of fine unbleached, with a binding of red or blue plain calico, and a bias of the same an inch wide, set one inch from the border; these, frilled at top and bottom, are very tasteful, cheap and durable. A very good carpet for a library or room not to be roughly used can be made in this way: paste over the floor a thickness of heaviest coarse brown paper; when dry, paste (not glue) another layer, and so on for three, or even four. Cover with a coat of cheap gray or yellow paint. Then all around the edge, paint a heavy inch-wide line of deep reddish brown; match that line fifteen inches farther in if the room is large, ten inches or a foot if of medium size. Between these lines paint in a solid color to suit yourself, and when dry lay on it, in some other color, arabesques or leaves. There is your border. Fill the centre in of a solid color, say deep blue or dark green: if you choose, you can paint a central medallion or some corner pieces. When well hardened, lay on a heavy coat of varnish. This carpet must not be swept or washed, but carefully wiped off with a woollen cloth, pinned over a broom. Lay mats where the heaviest wear comes; and if varnished once a year, or repainted where damaged, it will last for years. Indeed, love and need united will teach us very many ways of furnishing comfortably our homes at small expense. Necessity in the Home, as elsewhere, is the mother of invention."

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"And how shall we keep this cosy, tasteful home when we get it?" asked Miss Black.

Hester, who sat by me, thinking me a little tired, said: "Let me preface Aunt Sophronia's remarks, by giving you a quotation from a French author, Sauvestrè: 'I hate an aspect of disorder, because it indicates either a scorn of details or inaptitude for interior life. Arranging the objects in the midst of which we live is establishing between us and them bonds of appropriateness or convenience: it is fixing habits without which man tends toward the savage state. I should be suspicious of the good sense and morality of people, to whom disorder costs no vexation, or who could live at ease in Augean stables. Our surroundings reflect more or less our interior natures. If tastes did *not* betray character, they would be no longer *tastes*, but merely instincts.'"

"Hester," said I, "has struck the key-note of my answer to your last question. We shall preserve and enjoy this happy home by good order. We must take care of our properties: worn-out carpets, soiled and ragged table-covers, broken-springed and dented furniture, windows mended with paper and putty, marred walls, cracked dishes, give a forlornness to our homes. We must ourselves be methodical, orderly, careful in our use of things, and see to it that servants and children are so also.

"I have seen homes which children were permitted to turn into kingdoms of misrule. I remember one such, very well furnished to begin with: the children played with everything in the house; they played that the chairs were horses, cars, carts; these conveyances, to increase the general joy, overturned occasionally; as you may fancy, there was hardly a chair in the house uncracked and undented. They took the family umbrellas and spread them, for caves and dens of the earth, on the dining-room floor, in their hilarity rolling over in them, and bending the wires and ruining the handles. They took all the shawls in

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the house, pinning them together to drape the dining-room table for a wigwam. This topsy-turvy play left neither table, nor chair, nor rest for the sole of an adult foot. The tranquil mother never woke up to the need of stopping it, until her husband, cold, wet or weary, appeared at one door, and the remonstrating maid at another, vowing that supper was being ruined because she could get neither table nor chairs.

"If these children chose to play Chinese laundry, they tied strings all around the bed-room, and pinned thereto every towel in the house. Their father, come to make his toilette, stands with face and hands dripping, finding the stand plundered of napery, and shouts for a towel, losing his temper. The servant, coming to set things in order, cries 'she never saw such children,' tears down the lines, and thrusts away the towels promiscuously: clean ones, half-folded, in the drawers, other clean ones among the soiled clothes, dirty ones on the stands, and for days confusion is produced thereby.

"The fashion for sofas then being a long sofa with high arms, these children had a favorite game of sitting on the arms and letting themselves roll violently back on the seat. Imagine the way springs would break and covers wear out in that sport! They draped themselves in the embroidered piano and table covers to play charades, and tried gymnastics by jumping up and down stairs, as hard as they could pound, over the nice carpet.

"As you may guess, things wore out in this house. The mother vexedly declared she had not a decent room, and could not keep a thing in order. The children played snow-bank in the feather-beds as soon as they were made up, and when beds were negligently left to air until noon, they trampled the clothes around, making *tents* of them. The mother desired money for various uses: the father, an orderly man, sourly remarked 'that there was no use of laying out money; nothing was taken care of

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in that house.' The bed-linen, towels and shawls were ruined by pin holes, the furniture was worn and marred, anything was good enough for a menagerie or a monkey-house! Meanwhile, the children were not happier for this license and disorder. They missed dainty taste, and nice furnishings, and the repose of good management; especially as they grew older they found themselves dwarfed, fretted and discouraged by this lack of order and thrift in their home.

"Contrast such a house as this with Cousin Ann's, where children were taught that all things were to be put to their proper uses, and that the children themselves must help take care of things. I never saw a child there making a horse of a chair, or playing the coffee-mill was a steam-engine. Cousin Ann knew that children liked to play horse, and each child had a pair of knit reins, a broom handle with a famous horse's head of cloth on it; and Cousin Reuben sawed, hewed and painted a grand hobby-horse, with hair ears, tail and mane, and a red leather bridle—a hobby-horse which served each child in turn, and has gone to a grandchild.

"The children did not play den, wigwam and cave, in the house: they had for the house suitable plays and enjoyed them; but I have often in fine weather seen Cousin Ann, even when very busy, take time to teach her children how to make, in the yard, a wigwam of branches, or of old palings, or a tent of some discarded rug or cloth. If your neat, tasteful furnishing is to avail you anything in making home happy, you must take care of it, for unthrift and disorder are the ruin of homes."

"And what," demanded Belinda, "are some of the small ways in which, without thinking of it, we destroy home happiness?"

"One is in lack of courtesy, in failing to use the refinement and politeness at home which we think suitable abroad. But I have talked to you a deal on that head. Another error is lack of *punctuality*. This is a serious drawback to home happiness

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and is utterly needless. We can be punctual if we make up our minds to it. There should be an *exact minute* for ringing the bell for each meal; an exact minute for setting out for church; when we plan to go out, we should set an exact minute for going, and we should be ready on time; we have no right to waste other people's time; to rile their tempers; to keep affairs from going smoothly by being behind-hand; it is as easy to be five minutes too soon, as five minutes too late; lack of punctuality is a domestic crime. I do not believe Mrs. Winton ever kept any one waiting in her life. She exalts the social virtue of punctuality."

"I don't think," said Grace Winton, "that mother ever *did* keep any one waiting; I thought once that she had kept me for five minutes, but I found that my watch was wrong. Once she hired a servant—very good, except that she was unpunctual. Father said to her: 'My lady, you've got more than your match in this woman; if you get her nearer the mark than any time within an hour, you'll work a miracle.'

"But in a month that woman was punctual to the minute. The way mother accomplished this change was making a main object of it. For instance, the time for dinner came; into the dining-room walks mother and bids the boy ring the bell.

"'Oh, ma'am, dinner is not quite ready!'

"'I'm truly sorry: it ought to be; ring the bell: it is time for that.'

"So the bell rang; in we all came, and solemnly waited for the dinner. Not a word more of reproof; that waiting was as weighty a reproof as any words.

"Then in her zeal the woman got the meals ready too soon. and mother would say: 'Luke! why is that bell ringing? it is ten minutes before the hour.'

"'Please, ma'am, dinner's on the table.'

"'Then carry it back to the kitchen; ring the bell at the minute, and we will come.'

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"She never kept the meal waiting; if the woman sent word, 'Shall I serve supper? the young gentlemen are not in yet,' mother responded, 'Set on supper at the minute, and the young gentlemen can take their chance.'

"Our servants soon rejoice in our household punctuality, and it reaches out and pervades the gentlemen's business; they know *just when* they shall get to their offices, and they know *just when* they should leave. They arrange their work with a view to this, and find it as easy to be on time as to be irregular, and it is much better for health."

"Much obliged, Grace," I said; "we will all try to profit by that leaf from your mother's housekeeping book. Now I think of another thing needful in making Home happy. Don't get excited over small matters. Every one is liable to make mistakes, and we should not treat a mistake as a capital crime. We should not cast a gloom over the whole house because the sugar-bowl is broken, or the butcher did not bring the beef. The broken bowl may make somebody more careful, and a little ingenuity can compass a fine omelet folded over some minced veal or beef, or oysters, while a half pound of cheese, cooked in cream and crumbed crackers, will be a side-dish, and we shall have a decent meal after all. There is no use condemning the terrified maid who has spilled the gravy, as if she had murdered our best grandfather; we shall perhaps grow to be unlucky if we always whine over our ill-luck; let us clear up our faces and see where the joke comes in, and mingle a little comedy with our high tragedy, and our homes will be much the happier for it."

"Another way to make Home happy, and a very commonplace way it is, is to have enough to eat!"

"Yes," cried Dick; "that's what I like—let us hear about that."

"Give you ten minutes on that, aunt," said Hester, "and then

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it will be time for our supper, which Martha, Ann; and Hannah are laying out in fine style."

"A family table," I said, "should always be provided with an ample supply of palatable, nourishing, well-cooked, and well-served food. The expense of this food must be graduated by the fulness of the family purse; some people can afford the first strawberries and green peas; can eat gâme and fowl when these are dear, and can take the best cuts of beef and mutton; they are not obliged to be economical in providing for the table. Other people must study the strictest economy in their family marketing; unless one has a hobby—as costly books, rare coins, jewels or lace—the table is apt to absorb the greater part of the living-money, and our wastings and our savings are alike most marked in our larder. But while we undertake to economize in our meals, we must, as an old man was wont to say, do it '*judgmatically;*' it is no real saving to buy too little, or unwholesome food, for what we save in this direction is likely to be taken off by doctors' and druggists' bills. However, there are very many cheap articles of food which are quite as nourishing and palatable as those which are more expensive; if we cannot buy sirloin roast, or the finest porter-house steak, there are on the beef nice boiling pieces, which sell for about half the price of these choice cuts, yet are to the full as nutritious when well cooked; if we put the boiling-piece into cold water, and let it boil as hard as it can, uncovered, we shall get little in vigor or flavor for our money; but if, tightly covered, and well seasoned, it is put into *boiling* water, and then kept gently simmering for several hours, according to its size, you have a piece of meat which is relishing and wholesome the first day; will be nice when cold, sliced thinly and covered with salad dressing; will cook over with vegetables into a fine Irish stew; or minced fine, with seasoning and potatoes, and poured over toast, will make an excellent hash. A little parsley, a lemon or two, with rice for curry, or

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mashed potatoes and sliced carrots, will afford almost endless methods of cooking over such a bit of meat, and each time it will be agreeable to eye and palate. Samp, hominy, cracked wheat and cracked oats, are invaluable articles of diet, and are all cheap and capable of being cooked in many ways. In all our country districts milk is cheap, and is in itself one of our finest articles of food. If we cannot afford preserves, jellies and canned fruits, we shall find dried peaches, apples and blackberries very cheap, and even more healthful.

"In order that at each meal there shall be abundance, variety and attractiveness, and this within the scope of our means, we must have foresight in our housekeeping, and be provided in advance of demand. Some housekeepers never have anything ready in advance: they are always on the eve of bankruptcy in the larder. Now it is not only as cheap, but much cheaper, to have things made ready in advance of need, and in large enough quantities. If you keep plenty of bread on hand, you have the means of making milk or butter-toast, bread-pudding, or you can steam the bread and set it on the table as nice as when fresh from the oven; you can make a well-seasoned stuffing and re-dress with it, and roast the meat left cold from yesterday, and, ornamented with parsley and lemons, it is a dish for a queen. If you provide little jars of jelly and marmalade, little pots of pickles, have cheese dry ready to grate, and meat enough for a salad, or a dish of sandwiches, you can set a luncheon before guest, or member of your family, without confusion or delay. It detracts much from the happiness of home to feel that the unexpected appearance or invitation of a friend will be like a bomb-shell flung into the domestic camp. And yet when people have never anything ready, and the entrance of a guest means a mad chase after a Shanghai and a frantic mixing of biscuits, welcomes can scarcely be of the most cordial. That mother of a household is a treasure indeed, who

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is always able to offer a lunch to friend or family, to pack a delectable basket for a pic-nic on an hour's notice, to prepare, in hot haste, a tasteful luncheon for a traveller to take on boat or cars. Speaking of luncheon, you remember somebody says that Pitt died of not eating luncheon. Where the dinner hour is late people should not fast from breakfast until dinner. The system runs out of supplies and begins feeding on itself; the brain burns up the body; like the fires of a distressed ship, where fuel is exhausted, it burns up cargo, and wood-work, and lining to keep itself going, and, if the craft continues to float, it is a mere wreck. If we have dinner at four or five o'clock, then we should not go to bed without supper: for the fast of fourteen or sixteen hours until breakfast is too great a tax on our vitality. If we play tricks on our physique, and like the man famous among fools, try to make our working beast live on a straw a day, we shall, like him, find the brute, dying just as the experiment reaches its climax."

"And what shall this luncheon be?" asked Mary Watkins.

"Chocolate is very nice in cold weather, and lemonade in hot weather, if you can afford it. Where rich milk is plenty, nothing is more delicious than a dish of brown bread and milk, and a plate of fresh berries. Sandwiches, either of ham, beef or tongue, are good. A salad is always in place. A delightful salad can be made of white lettuce, bleached turnip-tops, and celery finely cut, and well-dressed with the salad mixture already recommended to you. A good white soup and stale bread make a fair lunch also. Cold chicken; biscuit sliced thin; plain 'training-day gingerbread;' a plate of thin bread and butter to accompany a plate of sardines laid out whole and dressed with thin rounds of lemon, or of cucumber-pickle; a dish of crackers, and another of mixed figs and raisins—all these are good for luncheon. Have little cake or pie for that meal, but plenty of fruit."

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"And what is reasonable for supper, if one dines at four or five?"

"A glass of milk and some sponge-cake; a thin slice of bread and butter, and a baked apple; a sandwich of grated tongue; a sandwich of very thin bread, buttered and seasoned; and boiled egg sliced very thin and used instead of meat. Perhaps, for cool weather, the very best supper of all is what we borrow from the Scotch: a dish of oatmeal porridge, eaten either with new milk or with butter and sugar. Figs and fresh grapes are always in order: one can hardly eat too freely of either; and for most people a small cup of cream and a slice of brown bread is a treat fit for the gods."

We were now called out to a supper which was beautiful to the eye and delectable to the taste, and very joyfully received by the whole party. I thought my guests would, after supper, branch out to more general subjects, and consider that they had had instruction enough for one day. But, no; when we were again in the parlor the insatiable James Frederick returned to the charge, saying:

"Aunt Sophronia, you hinted that we should try to be in order at any time to receive a friend at our table, without being put to extra trouble, or begrudging the entertainment. People also sometimes want to ask half-a-dozen friends or so to a little dinner. Give us some hints how to do this in simple good taste, when there is no one to prepare the feast but the lady of the house and an inexperienced Biddy or two. One would not wish to make much display, nor to be in danger of being ridiculous."

"Neatness, simplicity and hearty good-will are never ridiculous," I replied; "and we must call these to our dinner-party. In the case you suggest, I would recommend that as many of the preparations as possible be made on the preceding day, so that the hostess will spare herself fatigue and hurry on the day

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when she must entertain her guests. Let the table-cloth be spotlessly white, and ironed to a high polish; ditto the napkins; and the cloth and napkins must be ironed in folds to match, whether straight folds, diamonds, triangles or boxes. Be careful to stand the table straight, and lay the cloth exactly straight: a side-table must have a smaller cloth, ironed to match. Have a centre-piece of flowers, plain or elaborate, to suit your means and taste; a pair of clear glass-bowls, filled with lumps of ice, set at matched distances, are an addition in ornament, and have the advantage, thus used, that when they begin to show their melting they can be removed with some course, while if the ice is mingled in the centre-piece, it must stay, and become sloppy. If the table is very large, a couple of small boats of flowers can be added where there is room. There should also be a bouquet on the side-board. On the side-table should be placed the plates and other dishes requisite for changing the table. Every dish and every article of glass should be brightly polished; the silver should shine, and every shining salt-cellar should be freshly filled and printed in a small stamp. The soup-ladle should be placed where it is to be used: so with the fish-trowel and the tablespoons. Accurate table-setting is needful to prevent confusion, and unless the servants are skilful the mistress of the house had better spread the table herself before she goes to dress. Where the first course is soup, a square or oblong piece of stale bread should be laid on the napkin at each plate. By every plate place two forks, a knife and a spoon: where there is soup that is first course, and nothing else should be on the table; but remember to have your caster polished and well filled. When the soup or other plates are removed, do not let them be piled together, but that of each diner removed separately on a little server. During the serving of the soup the waitress will stand with a small server at her mistress' left hand to take the soup to the guests. Have your side-table in order

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a dish of butter neatly stamped and two goblets, with spare napkins with colored borders folded in points, improve its appearance. When the fish is set on, warm plates must be laid before each guest—no one wants fish on a cold plate. A boat of fish sauce and a dish of salad come on with the fish. Most cooks say, no vegetables with fish; nothing but an appropriate salad; but some people like potatoes with fish, and the best rule for dinner-giving is to please your guests' taste. Therefore, you may, if you choose, send potatoes on with fish, dressed in this wise: pare them evenly, and soak in cold salt water for an hour; wipe and slice as thin as paper; have a sauce-pan of lard as hot as can be without burning; drop the slices in, a handful at a time; skim out with a skimmer in a couple of minutes, or as soon as you see that they are done; sprinkle with fine salt, and pile on a platter, whereon is a fine napkin laid diamond-wise with corners turned in: properly cooked, these potatoes will not grease the napkin. Around the edge of this dish should be parsley leaves, and lemon-peel chopped fine sprinkled over the *parsley*. The broiled fish is improved by slices of lemon laid over it. Before removing the fish, carry away the fork and trowel on a clean plate to the side-table. After the meats come fowls and vegetables, for which hot plates must be served round. The table must be finally relieved of all used dishes, of casters, and unused silver and salt-cellars. If nuts are placed on the table with dessert, salt-cellars should be passed around to each guest, as nuts are always unwholesome eating without salt. After this removal of dishes the table should be brushed with a curved crumb-brush upon a small tray, or a large plate if you have no tray. Let there be no haste nor confusion in making the changes; let the host and hostess converse easily with their guests, and show no nervousness; if any accident occurs, the less said about it the better, and restore tranquillity as soon as possible Extra napkins and a damask towel. also a wide knife

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PULLING IN THE BOAT.

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and a soup-plate should be in reserve on the back of the side-table, quickly to repair any spilling of water or gravy. When you use finger-bowls, they, with their colored damask napkins, should be set at each plate as soon as the cloth is brushed: it is well to sprinkle a few drops of cologne or of patchouli upon the water of each bowl, but never any musk, as that is very offensive to some people. If such a misfortune happens as that any dish is spoiled—as a burned fowl—and cannot be brought to the table, let the hostess give no hint of the disaster, and make no apologies. However, if she has given to the last possible minute a wary eye to her kitchen, such disasters are unlikely to occur. I have said nothing of serving wines; I only mention it now to assure you that a dinner can be served in good style and in perfectly good taste without a drop of wine, or other fermented, malt or alcoholic liquors used in preparing it or served with it, and I entreat you all heartily to set yourselves against the drinking customs of society, and avoid putting on your tables that which may be the ruin of your own households and a snare to the soul of your neighbor."

"I'm a temperance man from this out," declared James Frederick.

"I'll give a dinner next week," laughed Sara; "it looks so easy!"

"Yes, it looks easy," cried Belinda; "but after all there is a tremendous amount of work to be done in a well-ordered household, and how *is* one ever to do it?"

"I suppose that is where the *good management* comes in," said her elder sister.

"That is it exactly," I said: "good management makes all this work move easily in its proper order; it takes away the attrition and drag caused by disorder, people see their way through each day, and know that for another day's work there will be another day. Now I cut lately from a newspaper a

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paragraph by an observing correspondent, and I pasted it in my scrap-book. Grace, it is worthy of being well read, and therefore you shall read it."

I handed Grace my scrap-book, and she read as follows:

"We see so many farmers working hard from the beginning of the year to its end, and that year after year, till life ends, with such small results, that we do wish to impress upon the community the true principle of economy a farmer's wife once expressed to us in one word—calculation. We found her a slender-looking woman, surrounded by a flock of children, and having the care of a dairy of a dozen cows, with no Bridget to assist her, and still everything moved on like clock-work. The children were tidy, the house neat, the cooking nice, and the butter of gilt-edged quality. We watched her to study the secret of her economical management. She never seemed to be in a hurry, certainly never in a fret, but went from one thing to another as calmly and pleasantly as the butterfly goes from one flower to another. We noticed that she had every convenience for her work. Water flowed constantly in her kitchen and dairy-room, and her churning was done by dog-power. We were satisfied, however, that the secret of her efficiency was not in churns, dogs, water, nor any other conveniences for labor, and we finally asked, 'How do you accomplish all your work with such apparent ease?' With a toss of her head and a pleasant smile she replied, 'By calculation. Before I go to bed I set my table and make all arrangements for breakfast. Before I get up in the morning I think over the labors of the day, and plan everything out, assigning each duty its time, and when the time comes I attend to the duty—and now the time has come for me to skim my milk; so please excuse me.' Upon this she bowed herself out with the grace of a queen. We could not help thinking, happy is the farmer that has such a help-meet."

After a little discussion of the theme of good management in domestic work, Grace said:

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"How time flies, and there are dozens of things which I wanted to ask Aunt Sophronia to give us a few suggestions about. There are so many little ways of adding to the hap piness of home."

"Yes," said Ned Burr, "and one of my favorite ways i keeping house-plants. I dote on them. They make a hous twice as handsome, and there is always something fresh, curious and interesting in them to look at. I mean to have plenty of them in my house. What say you about them, ladies?"

"Some people have the *knack* of keeping them, and have splendid luck with them," said Miss Black; "but as sure as I try to have any, they die of a hundred diseases unknown before, somebody runs into my stand and knocks it over, or a terrific freeze reduces them all to black stalks."

"Diseases are often occasioned," replied Ned Burr, "by the green plant-fly which sucks out their juice, or by worms in the pot. For the fly, soapsuds or weak tobacco water syringed over the plants, or washing leaves and stems in ammonia water with a camel's-hair brush will be a means of riddance; for worms in the pot, wet with weak lime water; the red spider is a vile plague, but a shower-bath and moist air will settle him. If your flowers mould or mildew, blow a little sulphur powder on them through a quill."

"Some plants fall ill," said Sarah, "from too dry air; a pan of water should stand on the stove, or a wet towel should be hung over the register to moisten the air. Sometimes the fee- bleness of the plant is caused by lack of nourishment: ammonia water supplies this; at other times the earth gets packed too closely in the pot, and no air meets the roots: it is well to stir the earth lightly with a fork. Each pot should have drainage, and flowers should not be kept too wet, especially in cold weather, for it causes them then to frost more easily. We should remember the ways of nature: leaves and stems are

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wet and washed by the summer shower, and often a soaking rain penetrates even to the lowest roots and 'fills all their veins with coolness;' but the earth is not all the time sodden on the surface. Plants need fresh air several times a week: if the sun is shining and the temperature is not too low, open the window upon them and let them breathe; give them sun according to their kind. If they get frost-nipped, set them in a dark place and shower them daily with cold water, gradually raising their temperature. When the plant promises to bloom too early, nip out the flower bud. When a branch or leaf cluster puts out in an ungainly place, nip it off. Sometimes when the plant is sickly, a close pruning and removing it to another pot will help it. Pick off dead leaves: do not let them exhaust the plant by hanging on half-withered. If plants are to add to the happiness of home, let the home have a share in them: let the children own some and cultivate them, let them be used to decorate the table, and to send to the poor or the sick. The plants will look better for all the good they can be made to do. Let each member of the family have his favorite flowers; some prefer one kind, some another. Plants should be on a strong stand that cannot be readily knocked over, and which is on casters so that it can be moved occasionally in cleaning the room."

"Speaking of house-plants, and of their care in winter," said Hester, "reminds me of that long, cold season when the daylight flies early. If home is to be happy, we must have some entertainment for these long evenings. Even where the family are engaged in study, there are some free evenings, and an hour or so each evening to spare. A home is not fulfilling its mission where the family must go abroad to find all their entertainment."

"That is true," I responded; "and first, one thinks of music as a family entertainment. Where young people have musical taste, and can sing and play together, and are able to have two or three instruments, as piano, organ, flute, violin or guitar,

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they will pass many hours in innocent happiness, entertaining themselves, and pleasing the friends who come in. Another very charming accomplishment—one, indeed, which has no superior—is that of reading aloud well. As some families are all good musicians, so there are some who are all good readers; in either case the faculty should be sedulously cultivated. Some families are happy in possessing both readers and musicians. By good reading I do not mean loud, excited, tragical tones—these often strain and weary the hearer; but good reading seizes the spirit of the piece read, understands its heart meaning, and through the ear translates it to the listener's heart. It gives the fun, the pathos, the excitement, wonder, logic, or confusion and quaint turn, which were in the author's mind.

"In good reading there is nothing mechanical. It is not droning over a certain set of sounds, which mean nothing to the heart of the reader, and, consequently, not to that of the hearer. The reader must be in a certain sympathy with what he reads, and by some subtle magnetism he will compel the sympathy of his listener. This is an accomplishment which seems to be always in place. There are in many households some whose eyes will not permit them to read much for themselves; or there are some who can illy spare time to read. The busy mother finds herself in a strait betwixt two: she wishes to read and enjoy the last book, or to take the paper and find out what is going on in the world; but she has the family mending to do. How much more swiftly will her needle fly through rents and darns when a good reader is filling her ear with sweet sounds and fascinating descriptions, adding to the 'charm of the poet, the music of the voice.' By reading, many can be gratified at once. Little children are generally fascinated by the reading even of things which they do not understand, and there is no finer and surer way to develop mind than this. Young people may be led, by the charm of being read to, to follow such works

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as Bancroft, Motley, Macaulay, Rawlinson, and other weighty writers. The sick, unless they are very sick, find the hours of illness beguiled of their tedium by a good reader. He who reads well can bring in their full impressiveness to the invalid's ear some suitable passages of Scripture. Nothing more cultivates good taste, intelligence and family affection, than this accomplishment. Be sure, then, and all learn to read well aloud."

"And," said Miriam, "next to the art of reading well, let us set the art of telling a story well. What can make the family table more genial, than to have some one tell, really well, an appropriate and not too long story? It persuades the mind from care, and awakens that jolly laughter which promotes digestion. No art is more needful to a mother than this of story-telling. It charms away the pain of a sick child; dissipates a fit of sulks, or a quarrel, as the sun puts to flight a cloud; while children's minds seize best the moral lesson contained in a short story. We have in the Parables an example of conveying teaching in a tale."

"I never could tell a story well," said Helen. "I begin, 'Well, once upon a time,' but I come to the end of everything almost immediately. The middle of my narrative is exactly like the beginning, and the end is just like the middle, while all the parts are as near each other as peas in a pod. My story is just like that horrible thing they used to torment me with when I was little:

> "'I'll tell you a story of old Mother Gorey, and now my story's begun;
> I'll tell you another, about her brother, and now my story's done.'"

We all laughed at Helen's description of her truly Arabian powers; but Hester said, briskly:

"You can tell a story well if you only think you can, Helen. You have made a very nice little story of your trials in this line. Forget that it is a story that you are telling; put out of your

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mind everything but what you are talking about. When you read, or hear a nice thing, go over it in your mind several times thinking how best to tell it. Tale-telling is an art worthy of cultivation. A good story-teller is a good talker, and a good talker is always welcome. Like a new Curtius, he throws himself into the awful chasm which will open in the midst of conversations, and so rescues, if not his country, the company."

"If it is lawful to compare small things to great; as said the shepherd, talking of great Rome and Mantua," said Ned Burr.

And as it was now quite late my merry guests departed, declaring that the evening had been as profitable as it had been pleasant.

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CHAPTER XX.

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL HOMES.

OUR last Christmas week proved a very agreeable and instructive occasion to many in our village. We received a great deal of information about the Homes of Other Days. It happened that at a church sociable, held about the middle of December, Mr. Winton made some remarks about Christmas as peculiarly a *home festival;* not only is it the festival which with gifts and games seems especially dear to children, and most warmly celebrated in homes where there are young people, but it commemorates the birth of the Christ *Child,* the setting up of the family of Joseph and Mary, the coming near to men of God as a Father, and Christ as an elder Brother. This led to some talk about the various lands where Christmas is celebrated, and about the various centuries in which this holiday has been observed, and so on to talk of Homes in different ages.

I think it was Hester who finally proposed that Christmas week should by us be dedicated to a set of sociables at various houses, whereat our host should tell us whatever was possible of some ancient fashion of home, using whatever illustrations of picture or relic might be convenient.

"The first of these homes which we discuss," said Mr. Burr, "must be the patriarchal, and I propose that we hold our first meeting at the parsonage, and our minister shall tell us what he knows of man's earliest home-life."

. . . .

"It is probable," said our minister, when we were all seated

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in his parlor at our first Christmas sociable, "that the domestic life of Terah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was very much like that led by the patriarchs before the flood. We must remember, first, that the very long lives of men in those days would be likely to advance rapidly art and invention, and we must not look upon these early fathers of our race as living in a gross or barbaric state, but surrounded by the simple comforts of life; and next we must remember, that while these patriarchs lived a wandering life in tents, continuing probably much of the manner of living of the Antediluvians, in Chaldea, and Egypt, and possibly in other countries, men were living in cities, raising great buildings, tombs, palaces and temples; were going to war, and devoting themselves to manufactures, and agriculture, and all the arts of life. But the tent-life of the patriarch is our earliest model of the Home. Before the Flood the children of Seth most likely abode in the territory called the Land of Eden, and worshipped God before the fiery presence, or Shekinah, which kept the gate of Eden. After the Flood we find the patriarchs building an altar for worship and sacrifice wherever they made a stay of a few months. The chief property of the patriarchs consisted of flocks, and herds, and droves of camels, and asses. The enumeration of Job's wealth gives us an idea of these possessions of an eastern rich man. These required a vast number of servants to attend them. 'Servants born in the house' represent master and dependents clinging together for generations. If the master were childless, the chief of his servants was likely to become his heir. The master of the family was both its king and priest: he administered the laws and offered sacrifices. Chief over the servants stood the steward, who was to his master a faithful, confidential friend, as Eliezer to Abraham, given even such business as selecting a wife for his master's son. The extent of the family retinue may be guessed from the fact that Abraham could arm three hundred

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men from his own trained servants. Such an immense establishment moved slowly through a country. The choice of a resting-place depended on certain natural advantages: a grove for shade, near lying pasture and water. Finding these, the tents were pitched, an altar built, a well or two dug, and the servants, with the different flocks and herds, scattered themselves in suitable locations at greater or less distance. So Job's flocks and herds were stationed over a large extent of country, and Jacob's sons removed with their flocks to a distance of several days' journey. On the line of march the camels and asses were laden with the tents and furniture; the women and children sometimes rode and sometimes walked, and the pace suited the needs of the flocks and herds accompanied by their young."

"It seems," said Mr. Nugent, "that I now get a clear view of such a cavalcade moving slowly through the land; and now that they have found a grove like that of oaks at Mamre, how does their encampment look?"

"Their tents," said our minister, resuming his theme, "were of skins, or of cloth of woven hair. The coarse black hair of the camel made a dark tent, referred to in the expression, 'black as the tents of Kedar.' These tents were supported by poles. The master and mistress had large ones; the servants smaller, according to their position. Often in summer the servants, especially the flock-tenders, slept in the open air, or in booths made of branches. The tents are pitched in a circle generally, and if the camping is for a long period, a light watch-tower is erected a short distance off. The patriarch had a tent for himself; his wife had her own, where her younger children remained with her; a tent was often reserved for the reception of guests; the principal women-servants had their tent; the grown sons had theirs, and as the sons took wives, new tents were added to the camp. The large tents were divided by

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curtains into three apartments. The furniture was simple: mats and rugs, pillows and coverlets, in use at night, were piled up by day for seats; the camels' furniture also served as seats. Hand-mills for grinding wheat, bottles of leather, pots and basins, a portable oven, and flat plates or trays of metal, were among the principal belongings, with cups, pitchers, and knives. People generally ate from a large common dish, using their hands or a cake of bread to dip up their food; hence, frequent washings of the hands."

"And," I asked, "what were the occupations of these families?"

"Many of the servants, also the sons of the family, led out the flocks to pasture, and guarded them night and day. The steward oversaw this work, and morning and evening 'told' or counted the flocks. Some members of the family hunted, bringing in game for food. This was Esau's favorite occupation. Sometimes the nomades remained long enough in a locality to raise a crop of grain, or harvest fruit, or gather a vintage, drying grapes and dates, and making wine. The women spun and wove the garments for the family and the curtains of the tents. The men made sandals and camels' furniture, and dressed skins. When guests came, the master and mistress showed their hospitality by themselves serving them, preparing food and so forth, instead of delegating these offices to servants. Their principal diversions were in music, having a number of simple instruments, usually accompanied by the voice; also the telling of stories and reciting of poems: these are yet the chief diversions of Oriental lands. Writing was practised, and astronomy was a favorite study."

"And what about their dress?" demanded Helen.

"Travelling caravans supplied them with the fine linen of Egypt, and the dyed stuffs of Phœnicia, and the splendid cloths of the Assyrians and Chaldeans. The women spun, wove and

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sewed. The veil was a customary and often elaborate article. Jewels, as rings, bracelets, anklets, head-tires and necklaces, were purchased from caravans, and much property was invested in these and in mirrors of polished metal. They also wore elaborate embroideries. Perfumes were in constant use, and much time was occupied in preparing them. The staff, the seal and the amulet were choice personal possessions. Combs and pins of metal, highly ornamented, were also among their treasures. Scarlet and white were the choice hues; black and deep brown belonged to servants and to mourning."

"And what were the chief articles of food?" asked Miriam.

"Vegetables, especially varieties of beans and melons; fruit, the fig, date, grape and olive being chief; wheaten cakes, olive oil and honey; milk, cheese and curds; fish, when obtainable; locusts, game, birds, and the flesh of goats, sheep, and kine, but flesh was sparingly used. The killing of an animal for food was regarded in a half sacrificial light. The animal was chosen and killed by the patriarch himself, and the blood was poured out in sacrifice. The wife, even though a chief princess, esteemed it her proper duty to prepare the food, leaving but minor parts of this work to her attendant maids. Water, milk, the juice of dates, and a sour thin wine of grapes afforded their drink. Sweetmeats of fruit and honey were in use."

"Hospitality was freely exercised, I think," said John Rocheford.

"Yes, the orientals were always noted for this: a guest was always in some sort an angel unawares, breaking the monotony of their lives. They had also family feasts and festivals, as on the naming or weaning of a child, or his coming to man's estate."

After this information given by our pastor, we spent the remainder of the evening in general discussion of the theme, and appointed our next meeting at Hester's, where she and

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Doctor Nugent must be prepared to expound to us the *Classic Home.* We expected something rather nice at Hester's, because there they have plenty of money, and their house is full of curiosities and antiquities, while we knew their hearts were set on entertaining us as well as possible. We were not disappointed. We were received in the front parlor, and when the hour for the Home discussion came, the folding doors were drawn back, and we found hung across the whole width of the back parlor a large painted canvas, representing the interior of a Classic Home. Before this picture stood a low table with various curiosities piled upon it. Doctor Nugent began the discussion.

"We have concluded to discuss, under the head of the Classic Home, both the homes of Greece and Italy, without dividing between them; especially as in an evening like this, one can only describe chief points without going into particulars. The picture which we have here represents the restoration of one of the homes in Pompeii, and from it we gather a general idea of the home of a rich citizen of Greece or Rome about the time of Christ. In Rome, the home of the Empress Livia has been found and laid open; also, in Greece, we have found the remains of both palaces and private homes, and we find the same general plan in all. Observe that the rooms are small, the ceilings are low, the walls are painted in brilliant hues—orange, scarlet and blue being favorite; and pictures are not framed and hung on the wall as with us, but painted upon it. The chief floors are mosaiced—that is, made of small cubes of stones of various colors, bedded solidly in mortar to form a pattern as a border, corner arabesques, and a centre-piece, as a pair of doves, a dog, a group of figures, or flowers. These rooms enter upon a central court, open to the sky, but screened by a pavilion from the sun. Here plays a fountain, the delight of the whole family; here vines grow, and jars of plants are in bloom. The floor of the court is in mosaic; around the sides and around

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the fountain are seats or divans in marble or stone; the ancients delighted in statuary, and choice works of art are placed in the court or in the rooms opening from it. These were supposed to create beauty of body and mind in the beholders."

"I observe," said Mrs. Winton, "that these rooms have not doors, but draperies hanging from their door-posts."

"Yes," said Doctor Nugent, "and notice the elegance of the effect. These walls are of white marble, or the pillars are of polished stone or carved wood. Here hang these heavy curtains in blue, purple or scarlet, with gold embroideries or deep fringes: they can be dropped for privacy or looped back, throwing the whole house into one apartment. For windows we have only these small, high-up, latticed openings; for fires the brazier full of glowing coals; or possibly some of the apartments have a raised floor under which heat is introduced, and that is called the *hypocaust*—a Greek word meaning a fire beneath. I wish to say that the Classic Home carefully attended to three important points: heat, drainage and baths. The drains were supplied with metal or clay-pipes running to the *cloacæ* or drains of the city; the houses also had deep, covered rubbish pits, and water was freely introduced. When one looks at fragments of ancient plumbing, one wonders at so small present advance in the plumber's art. The bath-rooms had tubs, seats around the sides and gayly painted walls. The beauty of the painted and frescoed walls, the elegance lent by open jars or vases of perfume, the presence of elegant statuary and the abundant use of flowers gave these homes a marvellous grace and refinement, and we do not wonder that they produced painters, poets, sculptors, orators. Notice also that the Classic Home is a religious Home in its way: the fire on the hearth-stone is sacred to the household *lares*, or hearth-gods; this shrine with images is the place of the *penates*, or household divinities, and here they offer flowers, incense and prayers. In this corner of

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the largest room you see a carved wooden chest, something like a little wardrobe: that is the family book-case. In that are kept the precious parchment books, rolled and tied, wrapped in silk, and scattered with perfumes. Books were not then given to children to tear up: books were venerated and treasured, and were choice heirlooms. Here is something else which was an heirloom: this elegant vase and bowl of Samian ware: these and crystal goblets were choice treasures. We are told of one Roman noble who condemned a slave-boy to be eaten alive by carp, because at a feast he broke a crystal goblet. The emperor, who was present, for his cruelty, freed the slave, and ordered all this master's goblets to be broken."

"I should like," said Mrs. Winton, "to hear something of these slaves."

"They were," said Doctor Nugent, "both captives taken in war and slaves born in the house. Power of life, death and torture lay in the hands of the masters, and often this power cruelly exercised, so that this slavery was often a terrible thing. Another view of it is, that slaves being made free could take any rank in society to which they had genius to attain, and reached often very lofty positions, being friends of emperors and nobles. They were adopted and made heirs by childless masters; they were often educated to be the family schoolmasters or tutors. The famous philosopher Epictetus was a slave. They were often the scribes and readers of the family; if the master were too lazy to learn his letters, he had his slave learn in his place. Many of these slaves were artists and artificers."

"Let us hear something about dress and social customs," said Mrs. Burr.

"That is Mrs. Nugent's part of the discussion," said the Doctor; and pulling a cord, he let down over the large canvas of the home three smaller ones—the picture of a Roman woman, one of a young boy, and a central picture of a dining-hall, with guests seated at a supper.

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We all considered the dress very beautiful: it was a white robe, with wide sleeves falling back from the middle of the arm; the skirt hanging in easy folds to the ankle, and showing the ornamented sandal; at the hem of the dress, and at the waist, a band of purple indicated the wearer's noble blood; the hair, not frizzed and twisted out of shape, but gathered up into a loose knot, following the contour of the head, was held in place by a large ornamental pin, and by a narrow fillet of gold, passing about the head. The fillet was not the only jewel, for she had rings, bracelets and a chain; also a mirror at her girdle. The lad was represented as crowned with a garland, and going to a feast, having just assumed his *toga virilis*, or man's dress. The picture of the table next attracted us.

Said Hester: "This table occupied three sides of a square; the fourth was left open so that the servants could freely enter to wait on guests. The host and his family occupied the places on the lowest or left-hand sofa or couch—all reclining on one arm at the meal. The place of honor was the lowest on the middle couch. Guests were sprinkled with perfumes: it was the custom for the servants to pour perfumed water from urns over the hands held above a basin, and towels 'with a soft nap' were then offered for wiping them. The guests wore garlands of flowers—myrtle, parsley and olive were favorites at feasts. Songs and conversation enlivened the progress of the feast; a deal of wine was used, and the feasting was carried through many courses and several hours. Fruits, flesh, vegetables, sweetmeats of all kinds loaded the tables. Fortunes were spent upon a single meal, and such dishes as peacocks' brains and nightingales' tongues were used for their costliness rather than for their flavor. Honey, used alone or made into cakes, was much prized. The slaves cooked and served the meal, entering in a long procession, bearing the dishes. These slaves waited on the table with their tunics kilted up out of the way, and

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A DECORATION.

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Horace ridicules a man who, to be fashionable, has his slaves bind their robes very high."

"And did they use cooking utensils like ours, and dishes like ours?" asked Mary Watkins.

"They had tripods or square frames for holding pots over a fire; they used ladles, skimmers, with draining holes in them, knives, long flesh-hooks, spits for roasting; a mill for grinding, this mill being made of two stones, with a handle in the upper one, and a groove out of which the flour may run; they used mortars for pounding fruit and spices; chopping bowls also. They had bowls, goblets, platters, deep dishes, from which several ate at once; pitchers, usually of elegant shape; also baskets for bread and cakes. They had table-cloths, and napkins for the hands. All household utensils, clothes, draperies, couches, bed furniture, chairs and foot-stools were expected to last longer than with us; they were handed down from father to son; much property was invested in elegant jewels and in choice robes. This property was cared for by the head slaves."

"And what was the family life of these people?" asked Cousin Ann.

"The young children remained in the care of their mothers; at eight or nine the boys began to go to school, when a slave, called a *pedagogue*, followed them to and from their master, carrying their books and guarding them. Girls also learned reading, writing and music, but were more usually instructed at home; they were also adepts in weaving, spinning and embroidery. Mothers seem to have had a large influence over their sons. These Roman and Greek ladies were generally much devoted to their religion; were deeply attached to their children, and looked well to the ways of their households; they were often very cruel to their slaves, and this indulgence in bad passions hardened their whole natures, so that often deformed or feeble children were deliberately cast out at their birth to die;

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or, if more children came into the family than the family property would be likely to endow, these were cast out to perish, or be picked up by strangers. Daughters were often dedicated from infancy to be priestesses at shrines, especially to those of Vesta and Diana. Vestal priestesses had high honors."

"What were the holiday amusements of these families?" inquired Belinda Black.

"The theatre, where plays or poems were recited or sung in the open air, was a favorite resort; gladiatorial games; triumphal processions; beast fights; shows given by candidates for political honors, or by the emperors; the singing or reciting of long poems—all these called out the people by thousands. The Colosseum was a magnificent circular building many stories high, dedicated entirely to such displays. They also loved gardens and rural festas; had many supper parties; entertained their callers with refreshments, and with exhibiting their jewelry, and the rich garments brought from foreign lands."

"Were they not very extravagant and luxurious?" asked Grace.

"They became so by degrees as they grew rich and powerful; they then indulged madly in gaming, drinking and feasting; the softness and effeminacy of manner that was once despised became the prevailing style. Immediately the nation began to weaken; their poets sang no more of gods and heroes, but of lovers and of wine; their reverence for their gods perished; they grew too lazy to labor, too weak to fight; corruption, bribery and murder became common, and these mighty nations fell before the strong barbarians of the North."

"And," said Doctor Nugent, "it is the home of these Northern barbarians, our ancestors, the home of Celt, Saxon and Norman, at which we must next look. Mrs. Burr, we go to you at our next meeting to hear about the Celt."

We now had opportunity to examine the curiosities on the table. Belinda Black picked up a little glass vial.

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"What is this?" she cried; "a perfume-bottle?"

"No," said Mrs. Winton; "that is a lachrymal or tear-bottle, where mourners were supposed to treasure up their tears as memorials of their woe. You remember the verse in the Psalms: 'Thou puttest all my tears into thy bottle?' These lachrymals were often buried with their dead."

"And what is this largest piece in the centre?—it looks something like a marble soup-tureen," cried Dick.

"That is another funereal relic," said Doctor Nugent; "that is an urn for the ashes of the dead. After the body was burned the ashes were quenched in wine and gathered into an urn. The body was burned with treasures and spices."

A number of Roman coins, medals, rings and amulets were also on the table. We especially admired two lamps: swan-shaped bowls, with fanciful recurved heads, which served for a handle, were to be filled with oil, and in this a wick floated; we thought, however, they would be but a poor substitute for our present lamps, to say nothing of gas. There was also a beautiful wide, flat bowl, ornamented with winged heads and wreaths of olive, which Doctor Nugent said was a bronze *patera*, from which priests poured libations of oil, wine or milk, in offering to the gods. A drinking-cup, shaped like a horn, some combs and a little metal hand-mirror completed the collection.

. . . .

"Now," said Grace Winton, when we had gathered at Mrs Burr's, "we shall hear how our great-great-greatest grandfathers, the Celts, lived and behaved themselves."

"They must have been horrible beings," said Miss Black. "I read that they went without clothes, painted themselves blue, and ate people! Is that true, Mrs. Burr?"

"Doubtless," said Mrs. Burr, "the barbarism of the early Celts has been exaggerated for the sake of magnifying the races which came after them. The Celts in a full dress of blue

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paint must have been either the representatives of the very lowest tribes, or Celts decorated for war in a style to horrify their enemies, just as Indians paint themselves for battle. Probably the Celts of Ireland, in some tribes and instances, did eat men under an idea of vengeance, or to increase, as it was fancied, their bravery. The Celts were very brave, hardy in body, strong of mind, and with a fine capacity for education. When religion and education were introduced into Ireland, the Celts of that country soon became the saints and teachers of the world. The Celts were religious in their natures: their ideas of God, the soul and the future were vague but sublime; they had none of the trifling prettiness of the classic mythology. Wisdom they reverenced greatly. Their most promising youths were sent to school to the Druids to learn to become priests: they sometimes spent twenty years in their education. This time was employed by them in committing runes and hymns. The Celtic women were strong in body and fierce in spirit; they frequently went to war with the men; they also loved the chase. The weapons of the Celts were of stone and bronze."

"What kind of places of worship did they have?" asked Helen.

"Great circles of stone, open to the sky, with an altar in the centre; on this altar they often sacrificed human victims."

"And what kind of houses did they have—are any left?"

"Three or four remnants of such houses exist: some on the shore of the Irish Sea, one or two in Scotland. These are *beehive huts*, with low, circular stone walls; they were about fifteen feet in diameter, and possibly as many high in the centre—no fires, no separate rooms. The fire was out of doors, a great bonfire in the centre of the hut circle, where they roasted their meat on spits before the fire, or making a great hole, lined it with red-hot stones, and putting a whole boar therein covered it with cinders and hot ashes, and so baked it."

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"Then, did they never boil food?" asked Mary Watkins.

"Yes; they had clay-pots which they set in hot ashes, and made the water boil by dropping in red-hot stones."

"A fine way to boil potatoes!" cried Belinda Black.

"They had no potatoes, for they have been but lately discovered and cultivated. They had beans, and they ground meal in a *quern*, such as our minister described to you as a mill in patriarchal times. What a trouble it was to strike a fire, when there were no matches, and flints must be struck together, or sticks rubbed on each other to elicit the wonderful spark! Furnished with clubs and with rude knives of flint, these Celts killed and flayed elks, oxen, bears and wolves; they dug caves for store-houses or habitations, cut down trees, cut up peat for fuel, and managed to scrape the surface of the ground, and sow a little grain. They dressed skins and made rude cloth for clothing; they made nets, and in boats of ox-hide stretched on a wicker frame they went out fishing; they made baskets of osier and willows, caught birds in traps, or shot them with arrows or with stones. In such rude homes the feeble soon died, the strong only survived. At mid-winter they kept a feast in honor of the northern gods. They boiled ducks, as I told you, by red-hot stones; hung the haunches of elks on sticks before the fire; the women made cakes by pounding up grain and spreading the wet meal on stones before the fire to dry into bread. The fortunate hunters put over their doorways the horns of an ox, sometimes eleven feet across: these were their trophies. They made for their children bows, clubs, tiny hide-boats, and knives of bone. They sang songs of battle, and of the fierce gods of the North-land. When wild beasts attacked them they fought them like beasts also, and the best hunter was the best man."

"And how did these people bury their dead?" asked Miriam.

"In barrows or mounds. With the dead body they put food,

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weapons, household utensils. Many of these barrows yet exist. A rude people, indeed, yet with the elements of grand civilization in them. Many of the Celtic tongues still remain, and some of their runes and songs are very lofty and poetic. The introduction of the Roman civilization, then of Christianity, the mingling, first, with the strong Saxon, then with the more polished Norman, have all contributed to change this furious hunter-Celt, of the beehive hut, into the gentleman and scholar."

"Mrs. Burr showed us some portfolios of pictures which she had made of Celtic relics: among these a hut, a barrow, a cromlech or place of worship, some weapons, knives, a hand-mill, a hand-made clay-pot, some water-jars and cups; copies from English books, or from articles in various museums."

Our next gathering was at Mrs. Winton's, and as the Saxons succeeded the Celts in the British Islands, and were also in the line of our ancestors, we were to hear next about them. Mr. Winton had been so much occupied with his business that he could not prepare for this occasion, and it fell to Mrs. Winton to give us our information. She began thus:

"A tomb in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery takes us very tenderly into the midst of the home-life of the Saxons. In this tomb lies a lady, clasping the hand of her husband, who rests at her right, and on her left arm reclines the body of a little girl. Here is a family buried lovingly together. Families or married pairs are often found thus buried in Saxon graves, and as these people kept slaves, whom they held in close domestic relations, they often had their slaves buried at the head and feet of their own tombs."

"Please, before you go further," said Sara, "tell us what are our sources of information concerning Saxon home-life?"

"They are four," said Mrs. Winton; "first, and least, are the remains of a few ancient Saxon abodes; second, we have a few old songs and tales which refer to domestic life; third, we have

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ancient manuscripts with illuminations, hand-painted pictures, generally the productions of monkish writers, and these pictures represent freely to us the dress, homes, furniture and manners of the Saxons; fourth, we have numerous mounds or barrows where they buried their dead, putting with them money, ornaments, clothes, weapons, utensils; out of all these sources we can quite clearly reconstruct the homes and home-life of our Saxon ancestors, from twelve to seven hundred years ago."

"Why," asked Ned Burr, "are there so few remains of Saxon houses?"

"The Saxons," replied Mrs. Winton, "were never a building people: they had little genius for architecture. We get that taste and capacity from our Norman blood, and that with Jewish instructions, for Jews were the first to build good dwellings in Britain. The Saxons laid a rough foundation, piled up earthen walls, with a little of stone or reeds intermixed, laid on a thatch of reeds and straw, and the house was done; it was but one story high, and not all under one roof. They made a grand outer wall or fortification of earth; this had one entrance, and at one end they reared a two-story tower: this arrangement was for defence. Next they made a central room or hall, with a roof having a hole in the centre; under this hole, on the earth, or stone-paved floor, they made a fire: even the houses of early kings had no finer reception-room than this. Around this hall were the sleeping-rooms or bowers for the family. These were frequently detached from each other and the hall, had no fires, and sometimes no windows; the floor was paved or of wood, the roof of thatch. We read of wild animals or of enemies getting into these bowers and carrying off women or children, while armed men lay in drunken sleep in the hall: so, too, often an enemy would send a spy to scale the earth wall, and set fire to these poor, straw-roofed homes. The walls of the wealthier houses were hung with tapestry made by the women: beds

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were wide shelves fastened to the wall, with sacks of straw on them, and woollen coverlets: lords and kings had nothing better. The floor had fresh rushes strewn on it in place of a carpet. Even so late as the year 1000, kings' rooms were carpeted with straw or rushes strewn over the stone or earth floor. The table was a wide plank on tressels, and when not in use was stood up against the wall. From this fact comes ou word *board*, as 'hospitable board,' for a dining-table. Among great people it was common to have the table always laid out with bread, meat and mead, for all to eat as they chose."

"Were they not great drinkers of ale and beer?" asked Dick.

"Yes, very. The horns of oxen and cows were often used as drinking-cups, having figures carved on them, and metal rims. As these could not stand up, they must be emptied at a draught and laid down: a fine excuse for greedy drinking. Three-legged stools were the common seats; but they had ponderous chairs with backs and arms, huge cushions, a footstool, and a square of woven carpet, or tapestry, to lay under the feet. The husband and wife were the king and queen of the family. They had a great chair with two seats in which they sat throned at the head of the board, or by the fire, while their children stood next them, and the servants behind the children; or the elder children sat on stools, and the servants stood. So at the table all ate together: the parents in their big chair at the head; the guests and children next; the servants below the salt. A guest, a priest and an eldest son were given places of honor."

"What fuel did they use?" asked Mary Watkins.

"They had wood, coal, cinders, peat. For lights they had from their Roman neighbors an open oil lamp with a floating wick, but used more frequently *candels*, very like our candles. They were made by squeezing a lump of fat about a wick, and this was stuck on a *stick*, or sharp iron; thus we get the word candle-stick. Notice that our words for fuel, as coal, cinders,

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wood, our words for common food, for cooking utensils, for ordinary furniture, for domestic labors, and for family relations, all come to us from our Saxon ancestors. Speaking of fire and lights, the Saxons, when they wanted some special illumination, stuck many of their *candels* on a fanciful metal-bearer called a 'candel-tre,' and the first fashion of our candelabras or chandeliers. Our word *larder*, meaning a pantry for food, is Norman, but the early Saxons had a word of the same meaning—'Spic-hus;' this meant the house of their food, and their chief article of food was bacon, called by them '*spic*.' The Normans called the 'spic-hus' 'lard-er' for the same reason, because it kept the lard: *i. e.*, the pork or bacon."

"What did they use for food besides bacon?" asked Belinda.

"Cheese, honey, mead, milk, butter, ale, also vegetables, especially beans. Potatoes and peas were quite unknown. Meat was roasted on a spit, or boiled in a pot hung over the fire on a crane. Fish they usually boiled; from this we get our expression, 'Here's a pretty kettle of fish!' The Saxons said 'cytèl-fisch.' Soup or broth was much used. Forks were never seen; plates were uncommon; cooks politely brought in birds or bits of meat fresh from the fire on the metal-roasting spits, and the guests gracefully took them in their fingers, and blew them until they were cool. Manners for which *we* would banish a child from the table were quite elegant among these, our Saxon ancestors."

We all laughed at this description. Miriam asked:

"Were they given to feasting?"

"Yes; and had cook-books, regular cooks, and state dinners. All the ladies prided themselves on knowing how to cook. They were fond of salt, pepper and garlic, also of the sour juice of fruits as a dressing. They baked their bread in flat-cakes, marked with a cross as an act of piety. Cups and mugs had round bottoms so that they would not stand: hence, our

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word *tumblers* for our drinking-glasses, which stand firmly enough."

"And at what time did they eat their meals?" asked Thomas Black.

"They had three meals daily at early hours. There is an old Saxon rhyme which ran thus:

"'To rise at five, to dine at nine,
To sup at five, to sleep at nine,
Makes one live to ninety-and-nine.'"

"Horrors!" said Mrs. Black; "I'm glad I didn't live in those days!"

"Tell us something more about their manners," said Miriam.

"Young babies were swaddled from head to toe as closely as Indian pappooses. At ten months old the swaddling was relinquished, and they learned to crawl about. Until the age of five or six they tumbled about naked, or very nearly so. During the day the men were busy at their hunting, fishing or rude agriculture; the women cooked, spun, wove, sewed, worked tapestry; the children kept in the house-enclosure or in their mothers' bowers. In the evening the family gathered in the hall: the parents on the settle, or big double seat, near the fire; the men cleaning their weapons or making bows and arrows; the guest, or the family-harper, or some wandering mimic-singer, had a chair, and sang ballads, and told stories, and all the news he had picked up in his travels. Often the priest, or a monk finding the home more attractive than his cell, had also his seat by the hearth, and made all eyes and mouths open with wonder as he told legends of the saints. or described his journeys through England, his life in some monastic school, or, more wonderful still, what he had seen at Rome, or even at Holy Sepulchre among the Infidels."

'What about their education?" asked Hester.

"They most of them after Alfred's day learned to read and

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write; also arithmetic and Latin. But these accomplishments were more usual for girls than for boys, for the boys were zealous in hunting, fishing and fighting, unless they meant to be priests. A lad was especially taught carving. Queen Edith was wont to meet the children returning from school, question them on logic and grammar, and give money to the best scholars. Their books were written on parchment, and illustrated with paintings. Clerks prepared many of these at a great price. Some families kept a clerk to collect and write out a library for them. Books were often bound in velvet and gems."

"What amusements did they have?" asked Sara.

"They were very fond of music, poetry-making and singing; they cultivated fruit and flower-gardens with enthusiasm. Embroidery was a passion with the dames; chess, backgammon and dice were also very common."

"I have heard much of their hospitality," said Miriam.

"Yes. They went out to meet and welcome a guest; sent him to the bath-room; gave him a chief seat at table; stood by, and waited on him as he ate. Ladies thought it the very cream of good manners to stand and wait on a guest. They had books and songs on courtesy and good manners, and we find that a thousand years ago Saxons taught their children not to enter a room without knocking, not to repeat what they had heard or seen in a neighbor's house, and to keep their hands and finger-nails clean. A tavern in those days was a road-side drinking-place, where decent people were loath to lodge—all houses were open to the traveller. Bede, a venerable and holy monk, gives these rules as to hospitality: 'First, wash the hands and feet of your guest; second, feed him; third, lodge him; fourth, after two days and two nights of free hospitality, inquire his name, his intentions and his antecedents, for after this you are responsible for his doings if he remains your guest.'"

"What was the domestic character of Saxon women?" asked Cousin Ann.

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"They were devoted mothers, very sharp mistresses often, as their slaves were so completely in their power. In their married relations they were often unamiable, for marriage was usually a matter of barter and treaty between parents, the young people having no voice in the matter. They thus frequently found each other uncongenial, and divorce was very common. Men even traded wives, and women allowed themselves to be bartered away, hoping for better fortunes. The Roman Catholic Church has always been very creditably arrayed against divorce, and it used its whole power to maintain the marriage tie among Saxon Catholics, but for some two hundred years with but little effect."

"Of course," said Mrs. Burr, "the Saxon home was a constantly improving home in its furniture, manners and customs, as Saxons were a studious people, and were more and more thrown into contact with other and more refined nations."

"Yes," said Mrs. Winton, "the wild Saxons who invaded England after the Romans departed were moulded by the end of Alfred's reign into a single strong nation, with schools, churches, and agriculture, some manufactures, and with comfortable homes; the kingdom had become a prize worthy of the desire of William the Norman."

"The entrance of William and his Normans to England," said Doctor Nugent, "brings us to another period in our history of home-life. I see on Aunt Sophronia's face a serene smile, that betokens her self-gratulation at having escaped giving us a disquisition; Aunt Sophronia rejoices too soon. Day after tomorrow evening we propose all to be at her house to listen to a description of English homes after the Norman Conquest."

Every one laughed, and I said, with truth, that I wished that they had chosen some one who knew more about the subject.

"These talks on old-time homes," said John Rocheford, "are

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not meant to be exhaustive or learned lectures: they are merely to give us some ideas of the progress of domestic life, of the gradual introduction of our present conveniences of furniture, dress and refinement. What are now the ordinary comforts of our poorest homes were once luxuries to kings; among the Saxons, up to the Conquest, a pillow was a comfort bestowed only on sick women, and a man who could five years after his marriage buy a flock-bed and a pair of heavy blankets or wool quilts thought himself well off. The poor ate their common food of porridge and milk, or soup, from a little wooden trough, called a trencher; three horn-spoons and one huge knife was a fine outfit of tableware, while glass in a window and a decent chimney were unknown."

"I'm glad," said Mrs. Black, "that I was not born in 'good old times!'"

When my guests on Thursday evening were ready to hear the few and simple observations which I had prepared on Norman homes, I began:

"I find my subject naturally following, and well introduced by Mrs. Winton's talk. The Normans were in possession of greater luxuries, though not at all what we would call splendor. They built houses of two stories, and made use of the round arch for doors and windows. The Normans were fond of revelry and had elaborate kitchens; they kept family butlers and bakers, and notice that many of our present surnames come from those who originally held these positions, or wrought in certain trades, as: Butler, Baker, Stewart (from house-stewart), Spencer (*i. e.*, house-keeper or *dispenser* of provisions and funds), Smith, and so forth. The Normans used many kinds of meat and gave it the French names, held by us to-day, as pork for pig-meat, veal for calf, beef for cow or ox-meat—all these names being Norman or French in origin, the spelling being altered. They also used many birds and fowls, especially geese, of which they kept large

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flocks under care of goose-herds. The table furniture was more gorgeous in kind though not great in variety; more platters of metal were used, but no forks, and almost no plates; drinking-cups and flagons were of gold, silver and pewter. Every table had a supply of napkins, and basins for washing the hands, as people so liberally used their fingers for eating.

"As to sleeping, many people of all ages and both sexes occupied the same room, a custom which now excites our indignation in tenant houses, and in the present mean huts of many English laborers. The entire lack of glass in windows, the poor fit of doors and shutters, and the general loose build of the houses, insured ventilation, and with the hearty out-of-door life of every day probably was the means of saving the entire Saxo-Norman race from dying of scrofula, which is pre-eminently a disease of close apartments and foul air. The servants and common people lay in their ordinary day-clothes on the floor of the hall or chief room. Visitors were freely received in the bed-rooms, and, as chairs were few, they frequently sat on the bed, and so, perched like a set of school-girls in a frolic, they had collations served them. The children were sent to school, and the girls were quite well taught. Wandering minstrels, jugglers, mountebanks and story-tellers went up and down the country, and paid for their entertainment at houses by performing their music or tricks. Singing often accompanied the meals. An ancient book has the story of Herod and John Baptist, and shows Salome, the daughter of Herodias, standing on her head before Herod, at which performance king and courtiers look highly edified. The Normans presently added to the house a guest or reception-room, called a *parloir* or talking-place, from which we derive our *parlor*.

"Musical instruments were owned; a picture in an antique book shows two men playing together on an organ, and a man on each side blowing; they are in contortions of effort, but seem

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unable to furnish wind enough to the instrument, and one player has stopped to shake his fist at them. The Normans were great gamblers, and gambled with the game of chess, a game invented in the far East and brought by Byzantine Greeks from the Saracens. Its earliest mention is in 1067, in a letter written by the Cardinal Bishop of Ostia to Pope Alexander Second, and in this he complains that the Bishop of Florence plays chess, because the law only forbids priests to play dice. In the thirteenth century cards began to be used, and at this time masques and mountebanks in private houses began to go out of fashion. Two favorite pieces of furniture were a treasure-chest for valuables, called a *huche*, and a frame for hanging clothes, called a *perche*. The huche was heavy, large, carved, placed at the foot of the bed, and used as a divan or seat. It was the forerunner of the sofa and the linen-chest. The perche, at first a mere bar with pegs in it, was the predecessor of our hat-rack and wardrobe. Certain luxuries of life, which we regard as modern, are found depicted in the illuminated books of the tenth, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as *gloves*, carriages, and side-saddles. Copies of old pictures containing these are to be found in an English work by the antiquarian, Thomas Wright, 'Homes of Other Days.' Our camp-chair has its exact counterpart in a picture in a French romance of 1450; and our fine chandelier was called by the Normans a *candle-beam*, being three or four crossed pieces of wood hanging from the ceiling by a chain, and having iron points whereon to stick *candles*.

"In Norman times ladies began to practise painting, medicine and nursing as a business, but, unhappily, about the year 1500, we find that the formerly discreet wives of England are accused of going to taverns and pot-houses, and pictures represent them sitting on benches with their gossips drinking ale in public places. So unfortunately, at present, women, even with babes in arms, may be seen hanging about saloons and

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gin-palaces. Some of these pictures show the husbands coming to order their wives home, and these muscular dames square-off and maintain a pitched battle for their rights."

"Neither better nor worse than some viragoes now," said Dick, laughing.

"Human nature develops itself about on the same line in all ages and countries, if left to itself," remarked our minister.

"And that was a peculiarly rough age," said Doctor Nugent. "The kingdom was torn with quarrels between the nobles; the church was arrayed against the laity; the colleges were centres of mobs. A religion and an education for the commons, and a recognition of individual rights and human dignity were needed to subdue and civilize people."

"At this time," I continued, "a son at fifteen generally chose for himself his line of life, as war, the priesthood, the college, or agriculture, and his father furnished him for it as well as he could. Daughters were married with respect to their dowry, and matches were made usually by the parents, with reference to neighborly or pecuniary convenience. We catch glimpses in song, story and picture of the love of home, of husband and wife, of parent and child, and we have stray views of little English children playing with toy-whips, swords, dolls, hobby-horses, tops, balls, and all the playthings of modern childhood. Clothes were made in nearly the same fashion for young and old, and boys and girls looked like elderly people cut short. Home-spun, or linsey-woolsey, made to last a lifetime, was worn by all; buckram and leather were used in breeches and jerkins. Stockings were yarn knit, and shoes for the poor were often of wood, or of undressed hide. Fur and feathers were a favorite trimming, and velvet and silk were imported, decked with lace and pearls for holiday and high occasions. But then fashions did not change, and the best gown passed from mother to child and grandchild, and the father's state coat was handed to the third and fourth generation."

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"What," asked Miriam, "was the increase in furniture?"

"As wealth and trades multiplied, and crusaders and merchants returned from the luxurious East, furnishing became more elaborate and varied. The Saxons had bellows, tongs, poker and fire-shovel; the Normans added andirons and fire-screens of elegant designs; chairs were constructed of lighter and more comfortable proportions; the table had its solid top and its own legs, and was no more a board on tressels; lanterns were arranged for dark nights, and Sedan chairs and coaches for riding; window-curtains, and squares of carpet, and rugs were introduced; the *perche* became a wardrobe and a hat-rack; hassocks, stools and sofas filled the rooms; pictures decked the walls, and books were more common; printing opened to all men the possibility of a library; the tables rejoiced in cups, plates, forks and spoons. The Saxons and Normans became one people; then the English liberties were established; the Wars of the Roses ended; the Homes of England bloomed in the coarse magnificence of Tudor times, and then in the French elegance of the Stuart reigns, and the quaint, grotesque elaborations of Queen Ann, after whose furniture, and pottery, and jewelry we are now again going mad. It is worthy of remark that now in our humblest homes we have the comforts and little conveniences which it has taken ages to perfect."

"And," observed John Rocheford, "we might remember that people lived, and throve, and were happy, without what we call the necessaries of existence, without carpets, curtains, bureaus and toilette tables, arm-chairs and book-cases."

"Let us," remarked Mr. Winton, "not forget the ancestry of our domestic conveniences: our book-case was once the little carved Roman roll-chest; our wardrobe a peg on a beam; our chandelier a lump of tallow stuck on a stick; our sofa a money chest; our chair a '*fald-stol*;' our bed a shelf in the wall; our carpet an armful of straw; our oven a hole in the ground; our

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goblet a polished cow's horn; our plate a rough wooden trencher, a kind of chicken-trough."

"Well," said Doctor Nugent, "to-day, in our western outposts, people, brave enough to be emigrants and pioneers of civilization, are building up states, living just as rudely as this until competence and the railroad overtake them; and they are making the best parts of our country. Neither are they coarse nor unhappy because of these rough-and-ready surroundings. I have dined with a thorough *gentleman* with blocks of wood for seats, pine-bark for plates, and our pocket-knives to cut our meat, and relished the dinner too."

A very aged lady had accompanied Mrs. Burr to all these gatherings, seeming to enjoy them highly. She spoke for the first time:

"When I was a child I lived five years in an Indian wigwam."

"Oh, tell us about it, pray do!" cried all the young people, eagerly.

"There is nothing to tell," said the old lady, simply. "They stole me and I stayed until I was discovered and taken back. It was on the shores of Lake Erie. The wigwam was made of poles stuck in the ground and tied with bark-bands at the top. In winter it was hung with skins. Skins and cedar branches lay on the floor to sit and sleep upon. In summer the wigwam was covered with bark and branches. The description given of Celt life reminded me of our Indian life. The wigwam sometimes had a curtain across the middle, making two apartments. During the day the front flap was folded back; the fire was outside on the ground. When we moved camp the women struck the wigwams, loaded the little horses with poles, curtains, big kettles, baskets and pappooses, and away we went. All the work was done by the women: they set up wigwams, collected fuel, dressed skins, made clothes, pounded fruit into a kind of

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beer, dried or jerked meat and fish, pounded corn into coarse meal; were slaves, in fact, toiling with no thanks from morning to night. The men and boys hunted, fished, fought, danced, got drunk, made bows and arrows, and slept half the day when thev felt like it. It was no life of Arcadia, in spite of the poetry books. The summers were all heat, mosquitoes, hard work; the winters were successions of cold, sickness, sore hands and feet, and often of failing provisions and long-continued hunger. Yet I have heard of boys mad to go out West and live with the Indians, and of young women who longed to marry an Indian chief or brave. All I can say is they never tried it, or they would not talk such folly."

"We might continue our Home Talks indefinitely," said Mr Burr. "We could discuss the Homes of Egypt and Chaldea, the Homes of Central Africa, the Home of the Puritan, the Western settler, the Home of revolutionary days. Each variety would present its likeness to other varieties and its own distinct features But in all diversities we should find this fixed fact, that the Home is the centre of man's thoughts, the source of his comfort, the mould of his habits. The cradle of the child is the cradle of nations and of the church. The parents and the children abiding together, whether their possessions be few or many, make a Home, and how poor soever in property, this Home by faith and love can be a pattern of Heaven—a paradise on earth."

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CHAPTER XXI.

THE MODEL HOME.

AUNT SOPHRONIA'S IDEA OF A HOME IN ITS BEST ESTATE.

GOING one afternoon to call on Hester, I found her sitting in the bow-window of the parlor reading Plato.

"Still the favorite book, Hester?" I said.

She laid it in her lap with a smile; then replied. "The favorite book, and the favorite passage. Listen, here is something which you will like, Aunt Sophronia.

"Socrates is told that man cannot find his ideal. He replies:

"'Aye, he will—in the city which is his own, though in his native country perhaps not, unless some providential accident should occur.'

"'I understand: you speak of that city of which we are the founders, and which exists in idea only: for I do not think there is such an one anywhere on earth.'

"'In heaven,' I replied, 'there is laid up a pattern of such a city, and he who desires may behold this, and beholding may govern himself accordingly. But whether there really is, or ever will be, such an one on earth, is of less importance to him; for he will act according to the laws of that city, and of no other.'

"Is not that beautiful, aunt?" said Hester, as she closed the book. "It seems as if the gray old heathen must have caught some revelation of the glorious city, the New Jerusalem, whose maker and builder is God."

"As he develops his city in its minutiæ," I said, "it partakes

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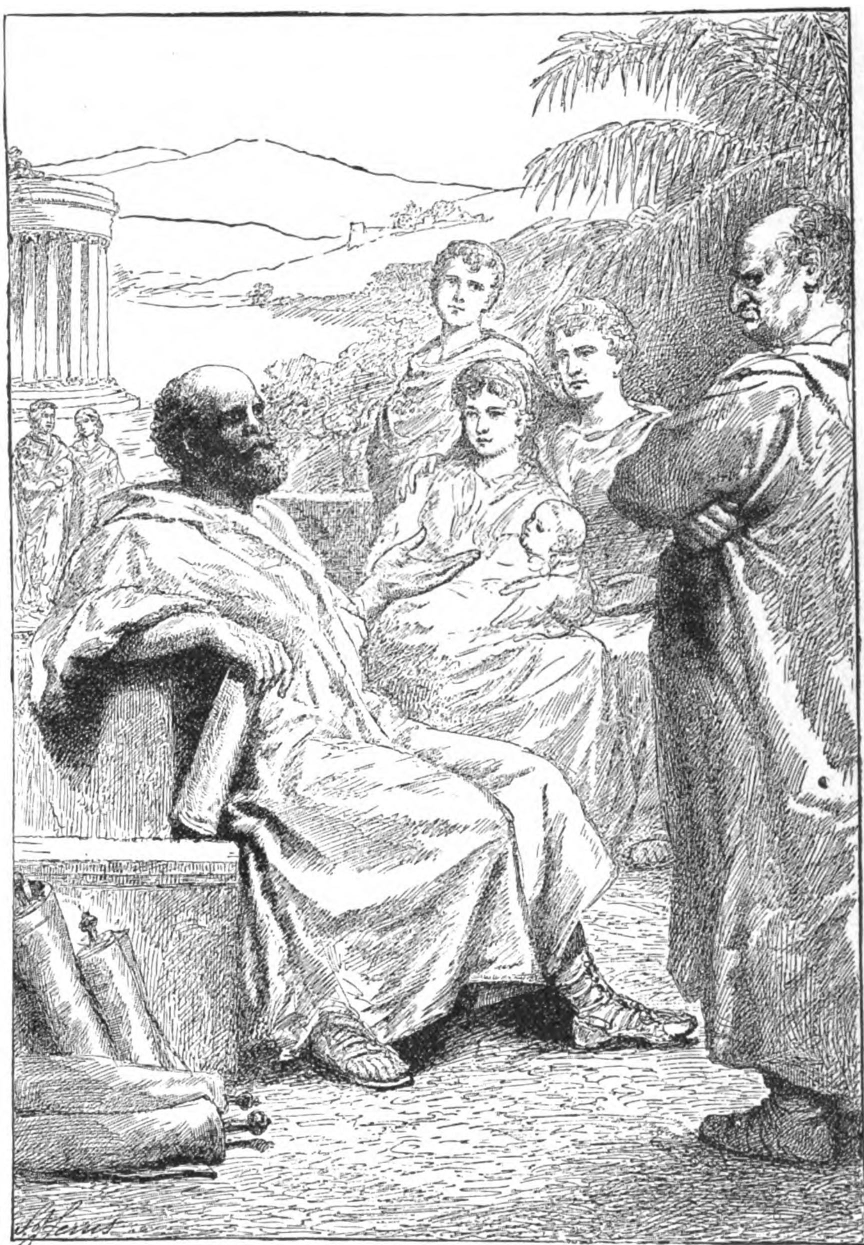

Socrates being to'd that man cannot find his ideal here, replied: "Aye, he will in an ideal Home."—*Page 512.*

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of the twilight of the heathen mind. But when it dawns on him as a whole, one would think he had been given a glimpse into the world of perfect models: the world which holds for us the ideal beauty; the ideal city; the ideal existence; the ideal character; the ideal home."

"Let us fancy," said Hester, looking across the lovely landscape which lay beyond her window, "that all that is really good here, inasmuch as it *is* good, partakes of the character of God, is in harmony with him; it is, therefore, a straight line, for he never deviates, deflects, nor has the shadow of a turning. It is also infinitely extended—eternized; therefore, being a straight and infinitely extended line, it is not bounded by our mortal limits, but is projected into the future world, indefinitely to develop itself in a growing likeness to the mind of its Maker. Of these things may be the home, designed, established, continued and finished in him. What then might be the infinite possibilities of the Home, the nursing place of immortality, immortal in itself!"

"You lead me too far," I said; "as the poet cries, 'to fields beyond our ken.' Who is it that says: 'There are plenty who indicate to us the road to the skies, but this man taught us a way through this lower world'?"

"That is Sauvestrè speaking of *Oncle Maurice*, and Sauvestrè has a very pretty paragraph on the Home. Let me read it to you."

She took a book from the table, and read: "Never before had I so comprehended the ineffable attraction of the family. What sweetness in these always shared joys, in this community of interests which confounds sensations, in this association of existences, which out of many beings forms one single being! What, indeed, is man without these affections of the hearthstone, which, as so many roots, fix him solidly in the earth and permit him to drink in all the juices of life? Strength, happi-

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ness—do not they all come from thence? Without the family, where shall man learn love, mutual aid and self-sacrifice? Society in miniature, is it not the Home which teaches us how to live in the world at large? Such is the sanctity of the hearth-stone, that, in order to express our relationships with God, we have borrowed words invented for the family. Men have called themselves the children of the Supreme Father."

"Yes," I said; "here is not only God's ideal of human life, but it is the foundation of society, of the state. This is our inviolate ark, and who would injure or destroy that would destroy human bonds and national strength. Let us exalt the sphere of Home."

"Since you will not devote your time," said Hester, "to fancies of what the Home might be in the land that lies very far off, will you give a little time to explicating your view of a Model Home in this world? In fact, I have a request to prefer to you, and I would have visited you for that purpose to-day, if you had not come here. Grace Winton is to be married to Dr. Nugent's brother. They mean to live here in our little town, and to build a house for themselves. You planned and superintended your house building, and every one likes it. Grace wants you to draw up for her your views of a *Model Home*. You can give your ideas of externals and internals. Depict it as it had better be when people are able to choose a site, and set up the home without being hampered by necessity of saving, and yet do not intend to live in a style of extravagance."

"But, Hester," I remonstrated, "such a work would require folios! It would take a lifetime to depict a Model Home."

"Condense it, aunt: merely suggest the topics to be studied, and hint at what is needful. A word to the wise suffices."

"But in many conversations at various times, with all of you young people, I think I have fairly unfolded my views of home, and home-life."

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"Let this paper then be an epitome of what you have said to us. Indeed, aunt, we are bound among ourselves to give you no peace until you gratify us, and then we intend to take the paper, have it printed, and a hundred copies bound to suit our fancy, and distributed among ourselves, as a memento of our many pleasant conversations on home affairs. Therefore become an author in little in spite of yourself."

With much fear and anxiety I addressed myself to my diaries, repositories of the thoughts of years, endeavoring to collate certain views of the chief things which belong to a home. And as the beginning of the home is in marriage, and marriage is an institution now often both openly and insidiously attacked by the children of riot and unrighteousness, I was about to open my subject with some words of my own on that topic, when I found these remarks of the Bishop of Winchester, offered at a nuptial celebration, and them I transcribed: "The whole of human civilization has its rise, its origin, in marriage: that which most distinguishes civilization from barbarism is the sacredness of the marriage tie and its indissolubility. The more sacred marriage is held by any people, the more certainly that people rises to a high condition of civilization. The married home is the type and the source of civil society. The home, the family, is the unit of civilized life. The home is also the type and the unit of the Christian church: only from the basis of the Christian family can we understand that great truth of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Christian man. No one can tell what the future may be passing into the generations of a Christian household. Think for a moment what was the future of that home when Abraham married Sarah He knew not then what it would be, that in him should all the families of the earth be blessed; yet all that sprang from that one holy marriage."

And now, my young friends, I trust that you hold these simple

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and sacred views of marriage, and I behold you newly wedded standing on the threshold of your future life. I would have scarcely known of what next to speak to you, but looking in this spring day from my window, a pair of newly mated robins and a pair of blue birds brought me counsel; they were nest building! The robins were erecting a new home from the foundation. The blue birds had found a nest of some other year and were refitting it. I observed that they who built and they who repaired proceeded on the same general principles, and that the homes when ready for occupancy were nearly alike. This is a copy of human affairs, for some young couples build houses for themselves and others do the best they can with houses already built, but for both there are certain general sanitary and æsthetic principles to be observed. Nor is it unfit to set this house-building closely beside the thought of the emotional and spiritual union of which we have just spoken, for the house in which the family lives has much to do with the health, happiness and perpetuity of the family; it is as the husk to the kernel, and the nest to the bird, needful to the existence, and indicative of the nature, of the occupant.

Now as the same general principles will hold good in building or remodelling a home, I will suggest some of the points which are to be observed, as far as practicable, in building a comfortable house.

Let the house stand on an elevation: this secures drainage, and prevents to a great degree malaria. If the house stands on rising land the cellar will generally be dry; and there can be no health in a house with a damp cellar. I notice many farm-houses set close down under a hill for shelter from cold and winds. They had much better be half-way or all the way up the hill: the breeze is healthful, but the mist hanging low in the hollow, in the morning, is deadly. If the soil around the house is gravelly, and declines gently on every hand, the position is

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enviable indeed. Not only will you have healthfulness, easy drainage and a sightly position, but your sloping ground offers a fine opportunity for terracing, and a sodded terrace with shrubbery, occasional small beds of flowers, and grape arbors placed over the main path on each terrace, making a succession of green arcades, leave little to be desired in the surroundings of a comfortable middle-class home. On this elevation set your house, facing the *southeast;* you will then have well-sunned rooms, summer coolness, winter protection, and escape damp walls and leaking chimneys. Let the house be rather high between joints: *very lofty* ceilings might dwarf the apparent size of the rooms and make them difficult to heat, but avoid low ceilings. Have windows judiciously placed so that the rooms can be well aired; in bed-rooms, see to it that they are so set that the room can be thoroughly aired without a draught passing over the bed. Do not have too many doors in one room, and never have a room capable of only being entered through another. Let the bed-rooms be comfortably large; have no nine-by-nine cubby-holes for sleeping apartments: crowd the parlor if you must, but let us, in bed-rooms, have space for breathing. Do not have bed-rooms on the ground-floor; it is *always* unhealthy to sleep on a first floor; many cases of seemingly chronic ill-health have been cured by sending the patient into the third story. Be sure and do not put the kitchen in the basement or cellar: this makes too many steps for the housewife; too much heavy carrying for the maids; the fumes of the cooking rise through the house and are driven back toward the furnace-cellar, and rise also with the heat. If the kitchen is beside the dining-room, do not have a door opening between them, but through a lobby; if dining-room and kitchen communicate, the dining-room is apt to be filled with steam, smoke or flies, as the door is constantly opened, and the people at table get a view of the kitchen whenever the waiter passes in

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or out. Be careful about the building of the chimneys: let them be curved rather than straight, and see that the draught is good, for few things are so destructive of family good temper, of punctuality, and of furniture, as smoking chimneys or fires that will not burn. Have plenty of closets. Some one says that "women especially appreciate the comfort and advantage of having plenty of these convenient receptacles for old clothes and dirt." Here is a very low idea of good housekeeping. All the closets in a house should be well cleaned quarterly: not a particle of dirt should accumulate in them to infect the air of the house with dust and stale smells. Old clothes should be promptly disposed of: those useful to be given away are owed to the needy; those which are to make house and cleaning cloths should be ripped, washed, and folded in a box; those which are kept for rug or carpet making should be ripped and cut as soon as possible. Old clothes hanging about, or tucked into corners, fill a house with mouldy smells, moths and roaches, and encourage mice.

Let every precaution possible be used in arranging flues to prevent houses catching fire; let no stove-pipes pass through wooden floors unprotected by earthen thimbles, and iron or tin sheathing, and let no pipes or low chimneys be placed where their sparks will lodge under a higher roof. Let the cellar be dry, hard finished, with well-protected and lighted inside steps, outer steps, and windows fit for ventilating, and wire-screened to keep out animals. Have a large cistern, with a filter. No water, unless of a very good spring, is so healthful for drinking as filtered cistern water. The best fashion is to divide the cemented cistern perpendicularly into two halves, the partition being the filter; let the water run in on one side, and the pump draw from the other. Both fuel and water should be obtainable without going from under shelter; many a woman's life has been sacrificed by being forced to run, while heated, into the

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cold or rain for water or fuel. Every house should have provision for several open fires. In early spring or autumn these are both cheerful and healthful, and nothing, unless it be sunshine, is more beneficial in a sick-room. If the house is furnace-heated, these fires are still useful. Every furnace should get its air supply through tubes or boxes communicating with the outer air, not less than two or three feet above the surface of the ground: one does not wish to have the confined air of a cellar distributed over the house for breathing, nor to breathe air impregnated with the damp, vegetable, and insect decay of the earth's surface. Let the furnace also have a water-box which should not get dry so long as fires are kept up.

If water is introduced into the house through lead pipes, great pains should be taken not to use the water which has stood in these pipes, as it has become poisonous: pipes should be lined with rubber. Never have a zinc-lined cistern, and do not allow water which has stood in a copper boiler to be used for any cooking purposes. City-plumbed houses, where there are servants, demand a housewife's constant vigilance to prevent the slow poisoning of her family in such ways as these. Extreme care should be used in cleansing all sinks and waste pipes: concentrated lye water, sal-soda water and ammonia water are all good, while too much praise can hardly be bestowed on *potash*, a strong, hot solution of which will destroy all hair, animal matter, vegetable decay and grease, and so save us the visitations of fevers and plumbers.

Every house should have at least two main stair-ways. As to the colors in interior finishing of a house, be sure and avoid glaring white walls, as they are bad for the eyes. Where rooms are whitewashed, the walls must be relieved by pictures, branches of green leaves and soft-colored draperies. Kitchens should have dark paint or dark graining. For halls and lobbies nothing is better than dark walnut, either the wood or walnut

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coloring, relieved by gilt mouldings. When pictures are to be hung on the walls the paper or wall-painting should be in subdued colors and without marked patterns. The ceilings are most favorable to the eye and harmonious which imitate Nature's hues for depth and distance, and appear in faint blues and grays. Where no pictures are to be used, the wall-papers can be largely figured, and walls of halls and large rooms can be beautifully papered in panels of landscapes or pictures of statuary. A narrow gilt moulding at the ceiling and one three feet from the floor favorably break the monotony of a wall. A solid or chiefly green paper is to be avoided, as it is usually poisonous, but deep maroons are rich, durable and harmonize with various styles of furnishing. Grainings and dark paints or stainings save time in cleaning, needing only to be wiped with a sponge, moistened in weak ammonia water, and suit many rooms. For a parlor, cream or silver-gray papers, with delicate gold figures, are very pretty. Some rooms look well, papered in columns and cornices, with medallions in the spaces. Choose paint and paper to suit the size, lighting and *use* of the room. It adds to the beauty and variety of a house to have something distinctive in the color of different rooms, as one in red, one in blue, one in gray, or in green—but here you must be chary for fear of arsenical poisoning; rose-color and buff are also choice shades for bed-rooms. Wall-papers can be cleaned by dusting thoroughly with a soft cloth, and then rubbing downwards in a long, straight, light rub with a piece of stale bread; do not rub hard nor crooked-wise. If you boil *whitewash*, adding to every two gallons while hot one tablespoon ground alum, one-half pint flour paste, one-half pound glue, the wash will be nearly as firm and shining as paint, while it can be tinted with indigo, ochre, or lampblack, or red, to give you sky-blue, drab or buff walls. Concerning furniture I have so lately spoken, that it is needless to say more on a subject so largely to be governed by

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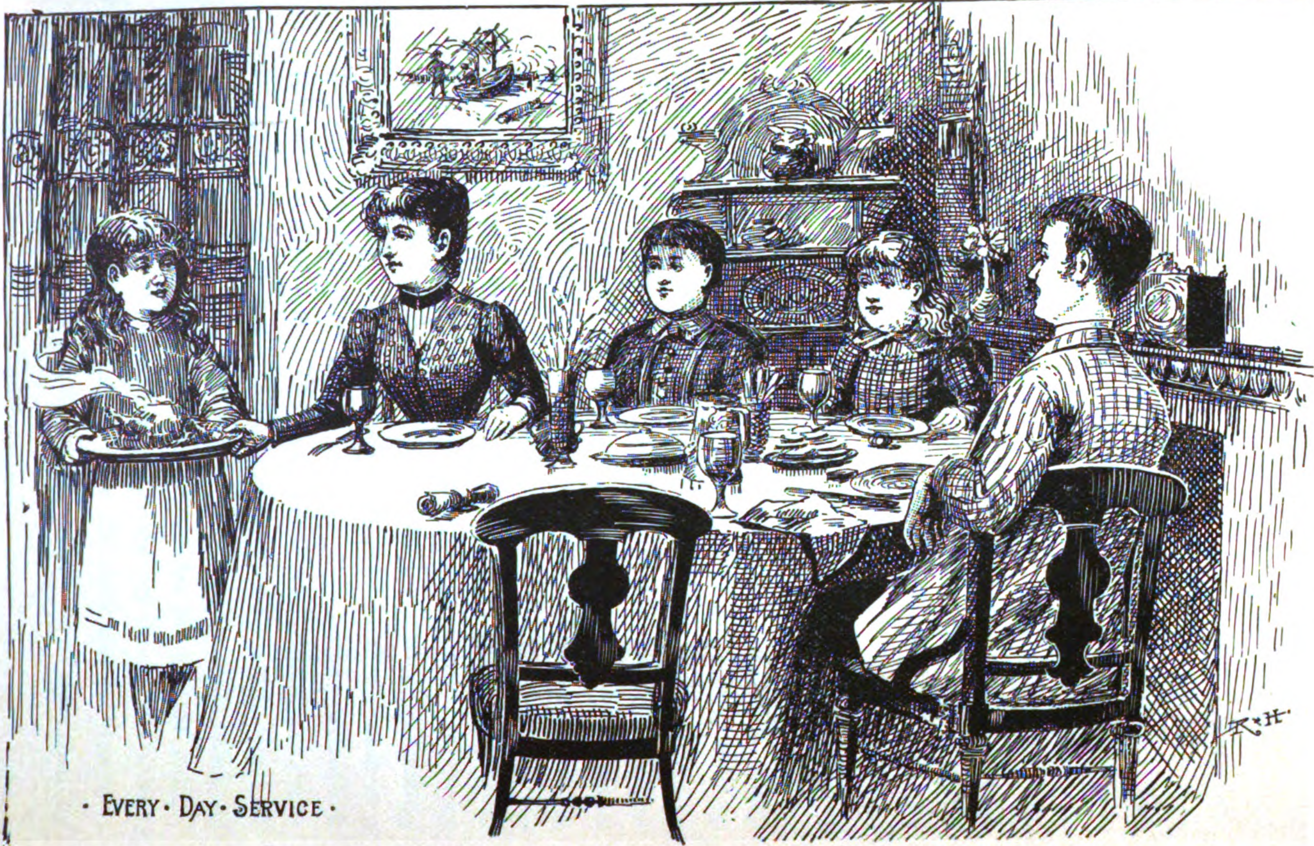

· EVERY · DAY · SERVICE ·

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each householder's taste and means. Let the furniture be suited to its use, solidly good in quality, subdued rather than loud in taste, and such as will give a home-like look to your apartments. Let there be careful avoidance of superfluity or sparseness. Do not have everything in the home *bought:* it savors too much of the shop and too little of human interests; looks too much like a hotel. Have little ornamental and useful things made by your own hands: they will indicate that the dwelling has an animating and interested soul. If you are unfortunately without an eye for colors, take counsel in furnishing of some friend who has taste in this direction, for a discord in color will strike some of your guests as harshly and painfully as a discord in music. Do not fear that you will betray bad taste by a *decisive* color. Some people fear to indulge in a line of red or orange or pure yellow, as if it were a sin: remember that these colors came to us from the Great Artist, that he has put peculiar honor upon them, inasmuch as the sunlight is golden and the morning and evening skies are freely painted in reds. Ruskin calls red pure color. Sometimes all that a doleful-looking room needs to correct it is a fragment of scarlet or clear yellow.

Now set this commodious, neat, convenient and tasteful house in its proper grounds; give attention to keeping these grounds neatly. Have flowers, and not too many of them to look like a florist's; have shrubs flowering and foliage shrubs, but do not crowd; have trees, but not too shady; have plenty of grass, smoothly shaven, closely sown and re-sown, until it grows like velvet. Do not forget to have patches of myrtle and of blue violets in nooks where they may "run out the grass," and be as lovely as they please; have vines, for nothing is more delicious than a fragrant honeysuckle or jasmine; nothing is more gorgeous in autumn than a woodbine, and nothing is more health-giving than a plenty of grapes. If there is room, cultivate small fruits, for they add to the healthfulness of a family.

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Now, into this beautiful and well-surrounded home we must invite those virtues which are the true Lares and Penates of a dwelling. First, we must call in ORDER, for where Order is lacking, comfort and beauty and their attendant train, and often love, will fly out of the window. Order will secure the saving of time, the saving of strength, prevent the rapid wasting or wearing out of house or furnishings, and preserve a healthful atmosphere, inspiriting to the family and inviting to guests.

But Order alone might be cold, and carried to the extreme of being forbidden. Let us secure the gracious presence of BEAUTY. The love of Beauty is in the human soul a reflection of the mind of God. Truly, He is a right kingly lover of Beauty, who could not let even a beetle go from his creating hand without polishing and spotting its wings; who paints admirably, not only the flowers of the field, but the fishes of the sea, the crabs crawling on the shore, and the reptiles burrowing in wood and wall. If we deny. our homes of beauty, we deny what would be inspiriting and refining to ourselves, and we bereave our children of their natural inheritance. Beauty makes homes dear to their occupants, it softens the asperities of life, and binds in mutual tastes and mutual pleasures the members of a family.

Yet the pursuit of Beauty must not lead us into extravagance. We must invoke ECONOMY to preside in our homes. Extravagance is one of the crying evils of the age: it provokes to envy, emulation, hatred, dishonesty; it has shaken the whole fabric of society, and the faith of nations. Where one man sins in penuriousness, ten sin in extravagance. It is a sin of selfishness and of deceit. The extravagance of the age has ruined homes already established, and hindered the establishment of others. People become too selfish, or too timid to marry. If people do not need to practise Economy for their own sakes, they must practise it for the sake of their children,

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of the community, and of their servants, and for the enlargement of their charities. Guarding against meanness, they must unite liberality with a wise Economy.

Economy is the virtue which preserves. There must be yoked with it the virtue which creates. Let us invite into our households, INDUSTRY. Accustomed to Industry, little time is left for contention, for vice, or for destructiveness. Let parents consider their families: if they have a child who is always busy, that child is peaceable, contented, breaks out into no disorders, destroys no property. What is true of the individual will be true of the whole family; what is true of the family will be true of the community, and of the state. It is the Industry wedded to the Economy of France, which, in dire disasters as great as ever shook a nation, has maintained her credit, and has prevented her being bankrupted, and parcelled out among the nations. A habit of Industry secures the future of our children. Wealth may fly: indeed, it seems to grow wings with wonderful facility; but Industry is a perpetual inheritance. Industry maintains the Home. This Industry should be honest and wisely directed: this can be secured only by development of the mind and the reasoning faculties; the hand must be guided by the brain; therefore, in our Home we must cultivate EDUCATION.

Education in a home is like a fountain of living waters. Education is constantly bringing forth something new and attractive; its ordinary tendency is to prevent extravagance and crime. It makes a person happy in himself; preserves him from constantly being cast on others for advice or entertainment; it refines away the roughnesses of natural disposition, opens to us opportunities of accomplishing things useful and praiseworthy: it fills usefully leisure time, binds a family in common interests and pursuits, secures cheerful content even in the midst of poverty, disappointment, or ill health.

The natural tendency of Education is to impress upon a man

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that he is one of many; that, not being in the state of savage nature, he cannot say that he is independent of his fellows, nor that they are independent of him. He recognizes that he owes duties to his race. The recognition of these duties, the realization of his wide relationships to his kind, reveal to him the duty of extending HOSPITALITY. Here is a rare Home virtue, by which the happy Home becomes as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. By exercise of this virtue the Home makes broad its gates, enlarges its sphere, and increases its benefactions:

> "Till, like a ray of light across the land,
> The heart's large love goes, brightening more and more."

As, in speaking of Industry and Education in the Home, we might refer to the parable of the entrusted talents, and the inquiry made after their use, so in regard to the exercise of Hospitality we may refer to that panorama of the judgment when we see the Judge seated on his throne, and hear him say: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; in prison, and ye came to me." Here, in Hospitality, the one jewel home is fitly set with others of its kind, crown jewels of the King.

Closely linked with the exercise of Hospitality is that grace of Courtesy, without which Hospitality would be but poorly exhibited. Let us in our Model Home exhibit COURTESY: this grace has well been called "the flower of flowers." This Courtesy fills the Home like a soft pervasive music; to its tender notes the joys and cares of domestic life move gently on, the one prevented from jarring the other, and concord is developed from the whole. This Courtesy is the very essence of the Fifth Commandment; it rises out of our brotherhood under one Father, God. It passes on from parents to children and servants, to the stranger within our gates, and gives to each his due, as "superior, inferior, or equal."

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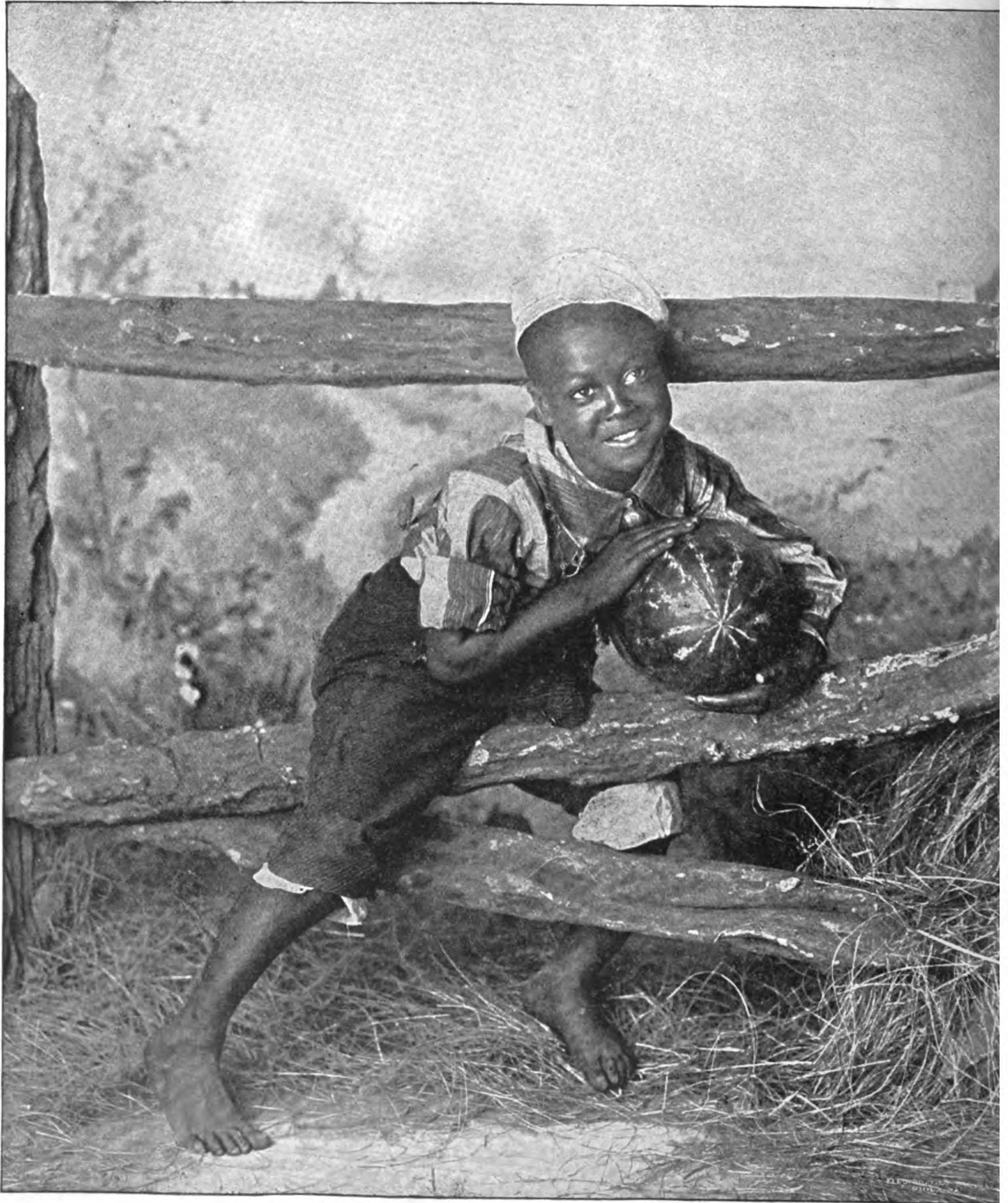

A HAPPY THIEF.

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Without this genial, chivalric virtue, there would be but little exercise of the grace of Friendship, and this brings us to the thought that in our homes we should cherish FRIENDSHIP. This grace expands the soul, it leads us out of selfishness, and a narrow round of thought, to sympathize with other hearts which have their own circle of attachments and duties; and thus, one to another, men are linked in kindness throughout the world. As, in the family, ages and temperaments vary, so the choice of friends will vary: the child has its inseparable playmate, the youth a chosen companion; the hearts which have experienced and suffered much find an affinity with souls of like experiences. Thus by friendships, while each member of the Family brings into the household interest and sympathy the comrade of his especial preference, the circle of Home interest and outlook is widened; these friendships constantly re-vivify the life of Home by bringing into it new elements, and giving to it new points of observation and contact with the busy world.

Now how shall these exterior claims be made to harmonize with the world within? How shall the duties of Courtesy, and of Friendship, and Hospitality, be performed without robbing any of the household of their rights? The demands of the Home alone are myriad, and what shall be done with this outer myriad of flocking cares?

There is but one way in which we obtain time for all, doing these, and not leaving the other undone, and that way is to have in our work an unimpeachable METHOD. Not only must we have Order, regular succession in duties, a time and a place for all things, but we must discern between the right and the wrong way of doing all things; and selecting for each duty the very best method of performing it, we shall have discovered a time and strength-saver which shall give us leisure for all things.

We must sweep a room by law, and then we shall have time for ethics. This beautiful Method we must extend to the hand-

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ling of the Family Revenues, and each month's expenditures and reserves should show a handsome piece of domestic financiering. Neither mean nor lavish, turning money ever toward its noblest uses, so that instead of our dollars being a gilded chain to draw us down to hell, they are golden rounds of a ladder whereby we climb toward Heaven; we shall find in lives enriched by liberality, lives honest and of good report, beautiful with art, graced with literature, expanded in benevolençe, that we have solved the mightiest problem of being, and while incapable of carrying our valuables out of this world *with* us, we have forestalled the hour of severance from earthly things, and have sent our treasures on before us, to be laid up for our coming in the safe-keeping of Heaven. Happy he over whom the daisies write the eulogy:

> "How many a poor one's blessing went
> With thee beneath the low green tent,
> Whose curtain never outward swings!"

And just at this point, when we consider how much of the funds of a Family are, in one way or another, paid out to employés, we are led to think of another Virtue of the Home—*faithfulness to our domestics.* We owe those whom we employ something more than their wages; we owe them human sympathy, interest in their personal affairs and well-being. In the servant we behold a fellow-toiler on that highway of life which is hard enough and dangerous enough at best; if we can warn of a danger, remove an obstruction, give a direction, show a resting-place, then just so far we are his keeper and responsible for his getting safely to the end of his route. The hired help is a very important part of the family, holding in his keeping a large share of the family comfort and success, and it depends very greatly on ourselves whether he shall be a real *help*, or a terrible hindrance. In fact, in the Family, UNITY must bind us together as a whole; the individuals must not be parcelled out,

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as weighing to see how much less of hearty affection may be dealt out to one who holds neither the pre-eminence of the eldest child, nor the petted position of the youngest; to this one who is only the stray waif of another family drifted into our Home; to this one who is the step-mother, or the old grandparent, or the maiden aunt; to this one who is but the hireling: but rather let us esteem love, unity in the family, as the heart's choicest gold, which we protect against loss, to which we daily add like precious grains, which we polish and refine, knowing it to be that which is in itself indestructible, and which can make us rich indeed. And how important is this maintaining of harmony—this giving to each heart its tender due! When we remember, that one by one these linked lives must be separated, that the Family Circle shall be broken, that the hearthstone and the board shall show vacant places, that those whom we love shall slip out of our sight, beyond our hand-clasping, out of the range of our voices, let them not go defrauded of our love, pained by our neglect: but dowered well with our richest affections, our lives with them projected into the future, and already sharing their immortal state, even for us who remain death shall have lost its sting and life shall have gotten the victory. How sings the poet:

> "O brother! only I and thou
> Are left of all that circle now–
> The dear home faces whereupon
> The fitful firelight paled and shone;
> Henceforward, listen as we will,
> The voices of that hearth are still;
> Look where we may the wide earth o'er,
> Those lighted faces smile no more.
> Their written words we linger o'er;
> But in the sun they cast no shade;
> No step is on the conscious floor!
> Yet love will dream, and faith will trust
> (Since He who knows our need is just)
> That somehow, somewhere meet we must."

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This tender love in the Home is mother of self-sacrifice, and thoughtfulness, and sympathy. It runs before demand or request to secure the happiness of each dear object; and where there is a prevalence of such love, where each member of the family strives as heartily for another's good as for his own, then the happiness of Home is secured; there all tastes are con sidered, and though circumstances may sternly prevent their gratification, yet they are sure of appreciating recognition. The children of such a home do not fly from it like young birds from the nest, and forget their cradle and their parents; but loving memories cluster around it, strong cords of affection hold the spirit, those who go out re-visit it often in dream and fancy, and whenever it is possible their pilgrim feet return to this Mecca of the heart.

Inspire now this blessed Home with the breath of immortality. This beautiful clay, moulded by the hand of the Divine Sculptor into the image of things above, is too fair to perish with the products of earth; this perpetually renewing Adam lacks only the breath of Elohim. Inspire, then, this home with a vital piety; turn all these faces God-ward; let them see towering above the far horizon of their life one object toward which alike all their faces are steadfastly set. This vital piety only will be able to give courage in disappointment, vigor in defeat, strength against temptation, wisdom in success, perpetuity to love, and faith to conquer death. On this theme I can think of no finer expression than that of a French pasteur, Coulins, in a sermon called *The Royal Family:* "With the eye of flesh I behold this Family in the midst of a proud and ungodly generation, unknown, despised, persecuted even, treated as the offscouring of all things. With the eye of faith I behold it alone received into the Ark of Safety, shone on by the blessed rays of the Sun of Righteousness, wafted by the favoring gale of grace, and, steered by a steady hand, sailing onwards in peace to the

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haven of a blissful eternity; whilst all around I see engulphed in the deluge of a common destruction the false grandeurs, the delusive distinctions, on which the children of earth built the frail edifice of their pride. With the eye of flesh I see society broken up into classes and castes, which seem divided from one another as by mountains and by impassable precipices, by those chimeras which we call birth, position, fortune, tastes, interests. With the eye of faith I see but one profound distinction among all earth's families, one privilege and one misery—the misery, immense, unfathomable, of being out of Christ—the privilege, immense, unfathomable, of being heir to redemption in him: a Family Lost! a Family Saved!! That family which has been called by that only name whereby we may be saved."

Before us thus opens a goodly vista: the whole family in heaven; the Home transplanted for still more excellent bloom and fruitage in the realm of compensation. Let us be sure that he whose hand has here been so liberal in giving will not begin to rob us as we enter his presence, but will add yet more and more to those good gifts which enrich a Home.

Even here below a wisely conducted home, where due regard is paid to laws of health and morals, is capable of long duration. Many couples celebrate their golden wedding-day surrounded, as by starry clusters, by other homes which have caught their light from theirs. When such a beautiful anniversary dawns, what memories of trembling hopes and anxious fears must crowd the soul! Here, in fair matrons and bearded men, are the children for whose lives we often feared when they seemed to hover on the verge of the grave. These athletes, who have battled with fortune, who have won their meed, and have passed the contest down to others, are those whom we feared could never hold their own in the sharp struggle for existence. Once more we see—

> "The world belongs to those who come the last,
> They shall find hope and strength as we have done."

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It seemed long to look forward, this lapse of half a century, but its memory is as of a dream of the morning, and the pair in whom so long ago the home began stand fresh and vigorous, and strong in experience, and glad in the fruition of their hopes.

There have been those who have not only seen the golden wedding-day, but have seen even the seventy-fifth anniversary of their marriage. Such instances are rare indeed, but in them we catch a glimpse of how long a home may be prolonged in its original founders, and we consider that in the succession of its inheritors the Home is immortal upon earth: it is an evergreen among the trees of the field forever imperceptibly renewing its foliage. The long silent and childless home of Abraham put forth new strength in the dwelling of Isaac, and spread out broadly and vigorously in the full house of Jacob, reaching at last in a millionfold vitality into the thousands of Ephraim and the ten thousands of Manasseh.

The family was by nature intended to be indestructible. This dying out of households is not in accordance with the original expectation, that each home should not only make its own place good, but yield to time the proper interest on its living. If a family dies out, it is undubitably because some law of health or morals has been violated; knowingly or ignorantly some primal law has been transgressed; the stock which should have grown better and better with civilization and cultivation has dropped into decay. A vigorous, active, cheery, confident, successful race is the heirloom of most good homes to the world. The homes of genius, of artists, of profound scholars, of great inventors, of unconquerable generals, of mighty rulers, are comparatively few. One home produced a William the Silent, and a million of homes gave him the dauntless nation which he lifted into glory. Nor is it mere numbers which are to keep a household from decay, a lineage from exhaustion; these excessive numbers are sometimes the very token that a family is "running out," that its vigor is at discount.

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Hugh Miller says he has observed that as a type degenerates, its individuals exceedingly multiply, but their perfection is lost, the germ of life within them is weakened, their value to the world is continually decreasing, and nature wipes out what is effete. How careful should parents then be to cultivate their children into the best that is possible in physical, mental and moral health, and into a dauntless courage which can bear the rude shocks of life, and become master of its own future. The host of children left to come up as they will, to tempt in folly and fault the ruin of their forces, is no boon to a state: the children, who will be to the world a gift worth its having, must be worthy in themselves, and worth is an affair of cultivation. Every family should behold in its children the norm of the church and of the state: the inheritors and creators of the future. Every age must cradle its own kings, conquerors, saints and philanthropists. The Home is the true "Tree of Universal Nature," which the Northern races celebrate: its roots extend through all the world and through all time, and it shall abide the last conflict, and live serene in a new heaven and a new earth. To shield and provide for this home, to bulwark it from foes without, to maintain its place in the world, is man's work—the work of the husband and father; and this work should ennoble him to himself, and make him strong against temptation, and eager in every way to fit himself to be a worthy guardian of what is so precious. He should feel that he attains his fullest and best development, and best justifies his living, in the happy exercise of family duties and relations: here lie his finest possibilities. To build up and guide the home within, to administer its resources, to create within happiness, affection, honor, is woman's part. Infinite indeed is the folly of that woman who depreciates or permits the weakening of this her kingdom, where she makes her best conquests, and secures her most beautiful rewards. That is a more than suicidal rashness which would

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yield that vantage-ground of Home, whence woman has been able to move and mould a world. It is a sphere which, on the one hand, is as wide as the world, and on the other is a calm and assured retreat, where one can sit down, and be at peace. Enter, then, O man and woman, into this heritage which God himself has given you; you set up this abode at the gateway of immortal life; you bring into it all that is best of your possessions; you strive here to develop all that is best in yourselves. And we, who stand by and rejoice in this erection of a New Home, behold in letters of light this scripture written over your doorway: "Now, therefore, let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee forever; for thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed forever."

It was in the above simple little paper on the *Model Home*—a paper expressing my most earnest feelings on my favorite subject—that for the only time in my life I became an author; for my too-indulgent young friends and relatives fulfilled their plan of having it printed for their own private use and possession, and whether or not in itself particularly valuable, I trust they will find it precious, because it embodies for them some of the best wishes of their

AUNT SOPHRONIA.

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CHAPTER XXII.

VALUABLE HOME KNOWLEDGE.

FROM AUNT SOPHRONIA'S SCRAP-BOOK.

IN making *Soups* for a family, nice bones, the trimmings and fragments of meat, and a variety of surplus vegetables, can be used to advantage, without purchasing new material. Soups should be cooked in a stone pot, or a china lined kettle. They should be cooked slowly, but for four or five hours; skimming them carefully. Strain through a coarse colander. Serve with bits of toasted bread, chopped egg and parsley, catsup, and grated cheese.

MURPHY SOUP.—Pare and chop fine six good-sized potatoes; put them in a kettle with about three pints of water; season with butter, pepper and salt; boil until just tender, not soft. Just before serving, break into it three or four raw eggs, stirring briskly to break the eggs before they cook.

CALF'S HEAD SOUP.—Take a skinned head, one set of feet well-cleaned, put into a pot and cover with water; let it boil until all the bones fall from it (about four hours); then take out the head and feet, chop very fine and put it back into the pot with sweet marjoram, cloves and black pepper to your taste; add to this, about fifteen minutes before taking from the fire, some forced meat-balls; should the soup be too thin, add a little flour and butter rubbed together; when done, have ready in the tureen two eggs, boiled hard and chopped fine, one teacup of water, and lemon sliced; pour the soup over them.

ECONOMICAL VEAL SOUP.—Boil a piece of veal, suitable for a fricassee, pie or hash. When tender take the meat up and slip out the bones; put these back into the kettle and boil for two hours. Then strain the liquor and stand away until the next day. When wanted, take off the fat, put the soup into a clean pot, add pepper, salt, an onion, a half teacupful of rice, a tablespoonful of flour mixed in cold water, and slices of potatoes. Boil thirty minutes and serve hot.

FRENCH SOUP.—Clean nicely a sheep's head and put it in four quarts of boiling water, which reduce to two quarts; add one small cup of pearl barley, six large onions cut up fine, one sliced carrot, one sliced turnip, a few cloves, a bunch of sweet herbs, pepper, salt and a little catsup of any kind. Cook one hour longer after adding all ingredients. Strain all off, cut the head into the soup and serve very hot.

MR. GOMEZ'S PEA SOUP.—Put the peas into water and boil about two hours.

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strain and put on fire; add vegetables (not cabbage) and fry half an onion to a crisp brown; small piece of ham; fry toasted bread and add in small bits.

SCOTCH BROTH.—Take half teacup barley; four quarts cold water; bring to the boil and skim; put in now a neck of mutton and boil again for half an hour; skim well the sides, also the pot; have ready two carrots, one large onion, one small head cabbage, one bunch parsley, one sprig celery tops; chop all these fine; add your chopped vegetables, pepper and salt to taste; take two hours to cook.

CELERY SOUP.—Scrape and cut into small pieces two bunches of celery, using the best parts only; add two quarts of good soup stock, with an onion cut into slices, and stew gently until the celery is tender; put through a colander, season with pepper and salt and return to the fire; boil up, add a coffeecupful of boiling milk, thickened with a little corn starch or flour, and turn at once into the tureen. A trifle of sugar is thought by many an improvement, while a few bits of fried bread put into the tureen before pouring in the soup are a nice addition.

RECIPES FOR MEATS, FISH AND GAME.

A GRILLED STEAK.—Ingredients: One-half a pound of rump steak, lemon, pepper and salt, butter and salad-oil. Time required, about ten minutes. Take a small bunch of parsley, wash it, dry it well in a cloth and put it on a board; chop the parsley up very fine with a knife; take a quarter of an ounce of butter and mix it well with the chopped parsley; sprinkle over it pepper and salt (according to taste) and six drops of lemon juice; make it all up in a small pat; take half a pound of rump steak, half an inch in thickness; pour about a teaspoonful of salad-oil upon a plate; dip both sides of the steak into the oil; take a gridiron and warm it well by the fire; place the oiled steak on the gridiron, close to the fire, to cook quickly; if the meat is at all frozen it must be warmed gradually through before putting it quite near the fire, or it will be tough; turn the gridiron with the steak occasionally; it will take from ten to twelve minutes, according to the brightness and heat of the fire; when the steak is sufficiently cooked, place it on a hot dish, and be careful not to stick the fork into the meat (or the gravy will run out), but into the fat; take the pat of green butter and put it on the steak, spreading it all over with a knife.

BEEFSTEAK A LA PARISIENNE.—Take a piece of steak about three-quarters of an inch thick. Trim it neatly, sprinkle it with pepper, dip it in oil and broil it over a clear fire. Turn it after it has been on the fire a minute or two, and keep turning it until done; eight or ten minutes will do it. Sprinkle with salt and serve with a small quantity of finely-minced parsley and a piece of butter mixed together and placed over or under the steak. Garnish with fried potatoes.

STEWED BEEFSTEAK.—Dissolve some butter in a stewpan, and brown the steak on both sides, moving it often, that it may not burn; then shake in a little flour and, when it is colored, pour in gradually sufficient water to cover well the meat. As soon as it boils season with salt, remove the scum, slice an onion, carrot and turnip; add a bunch of sweet herbs, and stew the steak very gently for about three hours. A quarter of an hour before you serve, stir into the gravy two or three tea-spoonfuls of rice flour, mixed with cayenne, half a wineglassful of mushroom catsup and a little seasoning of spice.

BEEF LOAF.—One and one-half pounds of beefsteak chopped very fine, and free from gristle; two cups of rolled crackers (fine), one cup of cold water, one-half cup of butter, salt and pepper to suit the taste, bake till done.

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STUFFED CORNED BEEF.—A very nice way of preparing corned beef, and of making a change in this oft-repeated dish, is to take a piece of well-corned rump or round, nine or ten pounds; make several deep cuts in it; fill with a stuffing of a handful of soaked bread, squeezed dry, a little fat or butter, a good pinch of cloves, allspice, pepper, a little finely-chopped onion and a little marjoram or thyme; then tie it up tightly in a cloth and saturate it with vinegar; boil about three hours.

HAM BALLS.—Chop fine cold cooked ham; add an egg for each person; a little flour; beat together; make into balls and fry brown in hot butter.

SCOTCH HASH.—Chop raw beef very fine; add butter, pepper, salt, and chopped parsley. Cover with water, stew it (well covered) for fifteen minutes. Pour it over slices of toasted bread.

HOW TO COOK BOILED SALT PORK.—Salted pork for boiling should have lean streaks running through it. From such a piece cut two pounds or more, according to size of family, scrape the rind well, wash clean, then put it to boil in cold soft water; boil one hour, then change the water, filling up with boiling water from the tea-kettle; boil another hour, then take it from the water, lay it on a tin and set in a well-heated oven to bake half an hour. Incline the tin, letting the pork rest in the upper part, so that the grease, as it fries out, may drip away from the meat. Turn the pork from side to side that it may crust nicely. Turn the grease from the tin as it fills up, so the pork will not rest in it when baking. Serve hot and see if the men like it.

CHICKEN DRESSED AS TERRAPINS.—Boil a fine, large, tender chicken; when done, and while yet warm, cut it from the bones into small pieces, as for chicken salad; put it into a stew-pan with one gill of boiling water; then stir together, until perfectly smooth, one-fourth pound butter, one teaspoon flour and the yolk of one egg, which add to the chicken half at a time, stirring all well together; then season with salt and pepper. After letting it simmer about ten minutes, add one spoon of vinegar and send to table hot.

CURRY.—Take cold chicken, turkey, or lamb, cut in small pieces, and put in frying-pan with about a pint or more boiling water; let it stew a few moments, then take the meat out, thicken the gravy with a little flour, add a teaspoonful of curry powder, pepper and salt to taste, and let it boil up once; have some rice boiled whole and dry; put it around the outside of the platter, and in the centre put the meat, and throw the gravy over the meat, not the rice, and serve.

A NICE WAY TO COOK CHICKENS.—Cut the chicken up, put it in a pan, and cover it over with water; let it stew as usual, and when done, make a thickening of cream and flour, adding a piece of butter, and pepper and salt; have made and baked a pair of short-cakes, made as for pie-crust, but roll thin, and cut in small squares. This is much better than chicken pie, and more simple to make. The crusts should be laid on a dish, and the chicken gravy put over while both are hot.

MISS DODS' WAY OF BOILING FISH.—The lecturer first plunged the fish (halibut) into boiling water, remarking that small fish should be first plunged into cold water. She then put into the water a pinch of salt and a tablespoonful of vinegar. "In boiling the fish," said the lecturer, "it depends on its thickness as to the time it should be boiled. The instant the fish slips from the bone it is ready. While it is boiling I make the sauce." To make the sauce Miss Dods took two boiled eggs, a dessertspoonful of parsley, an ounce of butter, half an ounce of flour, a gill of milk, a gill of cream and a little pepper and salt. The dry parsley was then chopped

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fine. The eggs were boiled for ten minutes and thrown into cold water. The yolks were then removed and cut into halves. "The sauce is really drawn butter," remarked the lecturer.

Fowls or meats when boiled should always be put into boiling water—not cold, unless the purpose is to make soup—and they should boil very slowly; hard boiling makes them tough, and putting into cold water makes them tasteless.

RAGOUT OF TURKEY.—Cut the cold turkey that is left over from a roast, or boil into bits an inch long; put into a saucepan the gravy left from the roast, adding a little water if the quantity be small; add a tablespoonful of butter, a teaspoonful of some pungent sauce, half a teaspoonful of cloves, a little grated nutmeg and a little salt; when it boils up put in the meat; stew very gently for ten minutes, and then stir in a tablespoonful of cranberry or currant jelly, a teaspoonful of browned flour wet in a little cold water and a wineglassful of strong lemonade; boil up once, and serve in a covered dish. A ragout without spice, jelly or wine is generally preferred.

STEWED TURKEY.—An old turkey is more tender stewed than when cooked in any other way. Put into a large pot half a pound of bacon cut in slices, a quarter of a pound of knuckle of veal, three sprigs of parsley, two of thyme, six small onions, one carrot cut in small pieces, three cloves, salt and pepper, and then the turkey; add a pint each of broth and water; cover as closely as possible, and simmer gently about two hours and a half; then turn the turkey over and put it back on the fire for another two hours and a half; dish the turkey; strain the sauce; put it back on the fire, and after reducing it to a glaze spread it over the turkey and serve. Some prefer stewed turkey when cold.

CHICKEN PUDDING.—Cut up as for fricassee and parboil, seasoning well with pepper, salt and a lump of butter, size of an egg to each chicken. The fowl should be young and tender, and divided at every joint. Stew slowly for half an hour; take them out, and lay them on a flat dish to cool; set aside the water in which they were stewed for your gravy. Make a batter of one quart of milk, three cups flour, three tablespoons melted butter, one-half teaspoon soda and one spoonful cream tartar, four eggs, well beaten, and a little salt. Put a layer of chicken in the bottom of the dish, and pour about one-half cupful of batter over it, enough to conceal the meat; then another layer of chicken and more batter till the dish is full. The batter must form the crust. Bake one hour in a moderate oven. Beat up an egg and stir it in the gravy which was set aside. Thicken with two teaspoons flour, boil up and send to table in a gravy dish.

BROILED PARTRIDGE.—If the birds are tender, split them open at the back and broil whole; but if not young, use only the breasts for broiling, reserving the other portions for a stew, or to help toward making a game pie. Use as little water as possible in cleansing game; many use none at all, thinking that by the use of water the blood, and, consequently, the flavor, is washed away and the meat left dry and tasteless. Dip the portions to be broiled in melted butter, and broil over a steady fire of live coals, turning often, and basting in the hot butter once or twice during the cooking. Be careful not to cook them overdone. Place on a hot platter.

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sprinkle pepper and salt and pour a little melted butter over each piece; then strew the surface lightly with chopped parsley and arrange a few slices of lemon over the pieces. Garnish the edges of the dish with triangles of buttered toast and spoonfuls of currant jelly; or place the toast under the birds and the sliced lemon and jelly on top of them. For breakfast fried mush may be substituted for the toast, and a border of shoo-fly or Saratoga potatoes around the dish.

SALMI OF WILD DUCK.—First, partly roast the duck; cut it into joints and slices; put refuse bits of fat or skin into a saucepan with a cup of gravy; two onions fried in butter; pepper and salt to taste, a pinch of cloves and nutmeg, parsley, marjoram and sage chopped fine. Boil one hour, skim when cool, and return to the saucepan with a piece of butter the size of a walnut; thicken with browned flour; let it boil a few minutes; put in the pieces of duck, after which it must not boil, but the saucepan should be placed in a dish of boiling water. Fry bread in some of the gravy; cut it into squares; lay them on a hot dish; place the pieces of duck neatly in the centre and pour the gravy over all.

BROILED QUAILS.—Pick them carefully, so as not to break the skin; split each one down the back and baste with melted butter; then broil over a bed of live coals, and baste twice with butter while cooking. As soon as done, lay each bird on a thin slice of buttered toast, sprinkle with pepper and salt, put a little more butter and a spoonful of currant jelly on each quail and serve immediately.

In frying meat or fowl, always put it into a hot pan, where the fat is already *very hot.*

FISH.

ROASTED CODFISH.—For roasting take a small, fresh cod, clean it well. Cut off the head and tail. Split the fish, clean it well and spread it open, sprinkle with some cayenne and a little fine salt. Have ready a thick oaken plank, large enough, or a little larger, than will hold the fish spread out open. Stand up the board before a clear, hot fire till the whole piece of plank is well heated and almost charred; but take care not to allow it to catch fire. Then spread out the fish evenly and tack it to the board with four spike nails, driven in so as to be easily drawn out again. Place the inside of the cod next the fire and the back next the board, which, if it has been well heated, will cook it through. Stand up the plank before the fire, setting a dish at the bottom to catch the drippings, and when you see that it is thoroughly done take it up, but do not move it from the board. Send it to the table on the board, the ends of which may be rested upon muffin-rings, or something of that sort, to prevent injury to the cloth. Eat it with any sort of fish-sauce, or with a little butter and cayenne only. This is now the most approved manner of cooking a fresh shad in the spring, and nothing can be better. Fishboards can be obtained at the furnishing stores.

BOILED TROUT.—Trout of good size are very appetizing when boiled like salmon or halibut. Put two tablespoonfuls of vinegar into enough boiling water to cover the fish; add a teaspoonful of salt and boil for twenty-five minutes. Serve with a drawn butter gravy, made by thickening milk with a little flour, and boiling it by placing the basin in a pan of water. Add a large piece of butter just before you serve it. Capers can be added to this sauce, or parsley, and the latter should be placed about the fish.

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BOSTON FISH BALLS.—Half a pound cold fish, three ounces suet, shred fine, a small lump of butter, a teacupful of bread crumbs, pepper, salt and nutmeg, and two teaspoonfuls of anchovy sauce. Pound all together in a mortar, mix with an egg, divide into small cakes and fry them a little brown.

FRIED OYSTERS.—Select the largest and finest oysters. Have ready a skillet of boiling lard. Dip your oysters, one at a time, in beaten yolk of egg, then in grated bread crumbs, lastly in sifted meal and then drop into the lard. Turn, and allow them to become only slightly browned. Drain upon a sieve and send to table hot.

STEWED OYSTERS.—Drain the liquor from two quarts of firm, plump oysters, mix with it a small teacup of hot water, add a little salt and pepper, and set over the fire in a saucepan. When it boils, add a large cupful of rich milk. Let it boil up once, add the oysters, let them boil five minutes. When they ruffle, add two tablespoons butter, and the instant it is melted, and well stirred in, take off the fire.

OYSTER MACARONI.—Boil macaroni in a cloth to keep it straight. Put a layer in a dish seasoned with butter, salt and pepper, then a layer of oysters; alternate until the dish is full. Mix some grated bread with a beaten egg, spread over the top and bake.

OYSTER PATTIES.—Make puff paste in this way: To every pound of flour add three-quarters of a pound of butter, the yolk of one egg; use ice-cold water; chop half the butter into the flour, then stir in the egg; work all into a dough; roll out thin; spread on some of the butter, fold closely (butter side in) and roll again; do this until the butter is all used up; keep the paste in a cold place while you prepare the oysters. Set the oysters on the stove in a saucepan, with liquid enough to cover them; as soon as they come to a boil skim them; stir in a little butter and pepper; also, if desired, a little cream. Line your small tins with your paste; put three or four oysters in each, add a little of the liquor, then cover with paste; bake in a quick oven twenty minutes; while hot wash over the top with a beaten egg, using a swab or brush, and set in the oven a minute or two to glaze.

Oysters may be more plainly fried, by merely rolling them well in corn meal and laying them in the hot fat. Do not let them lie long in the frying-pan. When clams are fried, the hard portion should be thrown away, as it is indigestible. Fish should be cooked *slowly* and thoroughly: it is done when it parts readily from the bone. Salt fish should be well washed in one water and put to soak, *skin upwards*, in a second water. Fish and oysters should always be dressed with parsley and hard-boiled eggs chopped fine. If *boiled*, serve dry, laid on a folded napkin, the sauce being in a sauce-boat. If fried, take care to have a nice, even brown, with no burned and no white spots.

VEGETABLES.

POTATOES.—A common dish for common people many think, especially if cooked unpeeled. Not if you know how to cook them. Many people boil them in a great pot of water, and then let them stand in that water after they are cooked. Always

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try to have potatoes of uniform size, cut out any rough places made by moles or worms. place them in a pot and merely cover with water; keep the lid on and do not let them stop boiling. Boil fifteen or twenty minutes, until done, pour off any water which may remain and let them begin to dry in a pot over a slow fire; thus you have a "dainty dish to set before a king."

COOKING CABBAGE.—A friend came in a few days ago to tell us of a new way of cooking cabbage, saying she was sure we would like the new recipe, if only we would test its virtues. Of course, we were pleased to add any new item to the housekeeping treasure box, and so listened with attention, whilst she recounted the formula of the new discovery, and this was the way of it: Trim a medium-sized cabbage, cut in half and put it to cook in cold water; let it boil fifteen minutes, then pour off the water and refill with boiling water from the teakettle; boil twenty minutes longer, then take the cabbage from the water, draining it dry; chop fine, season it with pepper, salt and butter, to taste. Beat together two fresh eggs and four spoonfuls of sweet cream, add them to the seasoned cabbage and stir all together. Butter a pudding-dish and put the cabbage in and bake in a well-heated oven twenty minutes, or until it is browned over the top.

FRIED CABBAGE.—Cut cabbage very fine, on a slaw-cutter, if possible; salt and pepper, stir well and let stand five minutes. Have an iron kettle smoking hot, drop one tablespoon lard into it, then the cabbage, stirring briskly until quite tender; send to table immediately. One-half cup sweet cream, and three tablespoons vinegar—the vinegar to be added after the cream has been well stirred, and after it is taken from the stove, is an agreeable change. When properly done, an invalid can eat it, and there is no offensive odor from cooking it.

COOKING ONIONS.—The best way we have found to cook onions is to put them to boil in soft water, letting them boil briskly till tender. Have ready heated a cup of sweet cream seasoned with butter, pepper and salt; dip the onions from the boiling water into the heated cream, taking care that as much of the water in which they were cooked shall drain out as possible before putting into the cream, then serve hot. Onions cooked in this way will not flavor the breath so fully as when cooked in the usual way, and are not as liable to rise on the stomach. In taking the skins off, stand by an open window or door, and there will be no cause for tears to flow, as the current of air in passing takes the pungent odor of the onion with it, thus giving relief to the eye. For medium-sized onions allow one hour's time for cooking.

HOTEL PONES.—Take one pint of fine Indian meal and one pint of milk; melt one tablespoonful of butter and add to it; beat two eggs very light; one teaspoonful of cream of tartar, dry; dissolve a teaspoonful of soda in a small quantity of milk; beat all hard and bake in a quick oven.

CARROTS FOR DINNER.—Wash, scrape, let lie in cold water for an hour or more; then boil until tender; drain, mash, season with a good-sized piece of butter; pepper and salt and serve very hot.

HULLED CORN.—Take white corn, if you can get it; none but plump corn; shell and boil it in weak lye until the hull is broken; then clean off the lye, fill the kettle, or turn the corn into a dish-pan; take your hands and rub the corn well; wash in several waters (the old way is nine times, but six will do); then clean your kettle and return to the stove; put in plenty of water and boil until very tender, which

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usually takes almost the entire day. As the water boils away add more. It is better to add hot water than cold.

TO BOIL RICE PROPERLY.—To every cup of rice, one quart of water; salt to taste. Let the water boil hard; then throw in rice previously well washed; when it begins to boil do not allow it to be stirred, and boil twenty minutes, not touching it; pour off any water remaining; place the saucepan on back of range, partially covered, for a few minutes; when turned out into the dish for the table each grain will be found separate. The rice should steam on back of range until it appears dry on top, then shaken out into the dish, not removed with the spoon.

BARLEY is a cheap, palatable, wholesome addition to our bill of fare. Boil it three or four hours, in a china-lined or new tin vessel; serve with milk and sugar, or merely salted to eat with gravy. Cold boiled barley is excellent rolled with flour into croquettes and fried.

BEAN POLENTA.—Wash common white beans, put them into cold water and let them boil about three hours, until soft and mealy; for every two quarts of boiled beans, take three tablespoons molasses, one teaspoon salt, one teaspoon mustard, one tablespoon olive oil or butter, one-half teaspoon pepper, two tablespoons vinegar; stir these in thoroughly and cook for ten minutes. The beans, when done, should be quite dry. Take great care not to scorch them. Beans are never so good dressed in any other way.

BEAN CROQUETTES.—Take the above, when cold, mould into croquettes with egg and flour, and fry to a fine brown; they are delicious.

BREAKFAST POTATOES.—Slice cold potatoes fine; season; have in a pan a cup of good meat gravy left from yesterday's dinner, turn the potatoes therein, and stir for five minutes.

POTATOES AU CREME.—Slice cold potatoes fine; have in a *tin* pan half a cup of nice milk, half a teaspoon of salt, a lump of butter the size of a walnut, a little pepper, a little parsley, if liked; as soon as the milk scalds turn in the potatoes and let them cook, stirring continually until they are nearly dry.

EGG-PLANT.—Soak the peeled slices for one hour in salt water, then fry brown in hot lard or dripping.

FRIED SWEET POTATOES.—Take cold sweet potatoes and slice thin; have in a frying-pan a large tablespoon of butter hot, or mixed lard and butter; put the potatoes in, sprinkle them with a tablespoon of *sugar*, and keep stirring until well cooked. Never use pepper and salt in dressing a sweet potato.

SQUASH of the patty-pan variety can be cooked exactly as egg-plant.

SPINACH is better steamed done than when put in water.

All vegetables should be put into *boiling* water which has salt in it, and the water should not be allowed to stop boiling, as this makes them watery. All vegetables, such as squash, carrots and turnips, which are to be mashed, should be drained well in a colander, then dressed with butter, pepper, salt and a little milk.

TOMATOES.—If there are a hundred ways of cooking eggs, there are as many for cooking tomatoes. When they are brought to the table raw the skins should *not* have been scalded off: if served raw they must be washed in cold water; and when

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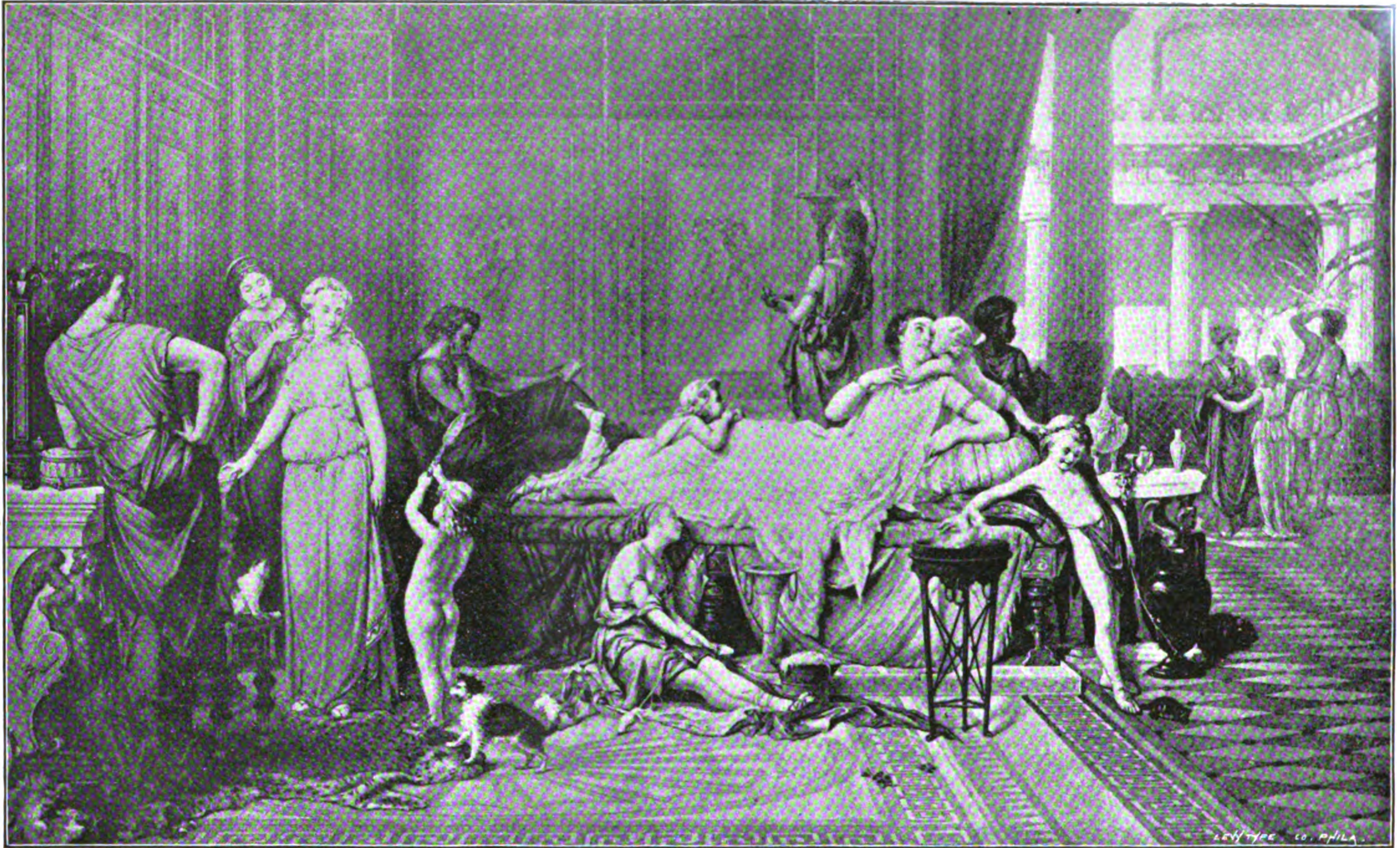

A POET'S HOME IN POMPEII.

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sliced set on ice for a few minutes, or in a very cold spring-house. **They are nice** sliced with cucumbers and onions, or cucumbers alone.

STEWED, they should have their skins scalded off; stew in their own juice, without added water, for fifteen minutes; then add butter, salt, pepper and bread-crumbs. Some like the addition of sugar, or to thicken them with flour.

FRY ripe tomatoes in butter; dress with cream, heated.

GREEN TOMATOES FRIED in butter and lard are excellent.

TO ROAST.—Remove the core, put in its place a bit of butter, salt, pepper, and cork with a square bit of bread; put in a hot oven for ten or fifteen minutes, basting with melted butter.

FOR CURRY—Cut up eight large tomatoes, put into a china-lined kettle with a half teacup of rice which is about two-thirds done, let them cook, stirring *frequently*, until the rice is well done; add a large tablespoon of butter, a dessertspoon of sugar, a little salt and pepper, and a little curry powder, or fresh mustard; stir for five minutes and serve. The consistency should be that of well-boiled rice. This is a delicious dish.

GREEN TOMATOES cut in slices, soaked for two hours in salt water and then made into sweet pickle, are delicious. Make the sweet pickle as for pears or peaches.

BAKED TOMATOES should be peeled and prepared as for stewing, be well mixed with bread-crumbs, and covered well on the top with bread-crumb and pieces of butter; bake three-quarters of an hour.

CUCUMBERS should be sliced in salt water for an hour before using; then dress with vinegar, mustard, pepper and salt. They are more wholesome if sliced with onions. A large cucumber, just about to turn white or light colored, can be fried as egg-plant and is quite as good. Cucumbers at this stage are excellent for sweet pickle, but the quarters must be soaked over night in salt water.

LETTUCE, CELERY, RADISHES AND ONIONS should be soaked for two *hours* in salt water—with ice in it, if possible—before coming to the table.

In the spring use freely *greens*, as beet or turnip greens, dandelions, spinach, very young *milk-weed*, lamb's quarters, etc. Also eat asparagus freely: it is a nervine.

SIDE-DISHES.

OATMEAL PREPARATION.—Oatmeal is very nice prepared the following way: Put a piece of butter the size of a hickory nut and a teaspoonful of salt in three pints of boiling water, then add one-half pint of oatmeal; for ten minutes let it boil fast, stirring frequently; then place it over a saucepan of boiling water, to continue cooking slowly for about half an hour. When over the water it will only need stirring occasionally.

PANDOWDIES.—Pandowdies are made by paring, cutting and coring apples enough to fill a very deep pan; put in a little cold water—a cupful, perhaps—and cover very closely with rye and Indian meal crust. Bake four or five hours, then break the crust up, push it down into the hot apples, cover tightly with a plate and bake two or three hours longer; then take from the oven and let it stand covered until morning, when, with good rich milk, you will have a dish fit to set before the king or any other man.

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MACARONI A L'ITALIENNE.—Take one-fourth pound macaroni, boil it in water until tender; thicken one-half pint milk with two tablespoons flour; add two tablespoons cream, one-half tablespoon mustard, a little white pepper and salt; stir in this one-half pound grated cheese; boil altogether a few minutes; add the macaroni, boil ten minutes. This is the mode adopted at the best tables in Florence.

QUEEN'S TOAST.—Cut thick slices of baker's bread into rounds or squares and fry to a nice brown in butter or lard. Dip each piece quickly into boiling water, sprinkle with powdered sugar and cinnamon, and pile one upon the other. Serve with a sauce made of powdered sugar dissolved in the juice of a lemon and a little hot water.

A DISH FOR BREAKFAST.—Take six good cooking apples, cut them in slices one-fourth of an inch thick, have a pan of fresh hot lard ready, drop the slices in and fry till brown; sprinkle a little sugar over them and serve hot.

EGGS AU GRATIN.—Cut some hard-boiled eggs in slices, lay them on a well-buttered dish; next, put a large spoonful of white sauce into a stewpan, with two ounces of Parmesan cheese, a small piece of butter, the yolks of two or three eggs and a little pepper. Stir over the fire till it begins to thicken, pour it over the hard-boiled eggs, sprinkle bread-crumbs over all, put the dish in the oven, and serve as soon as the contents begin to color.

ASTOR HOUSE ROLLS.—Into two quarts of flour put pieces of butter the size of n egg, a little salt, one tablespoonful of white sugar, one pint of milk, scalded and dd while warm; half a cup of yeast, or one small cake; when the sponge is light, nould for fifteen minutes; let it rise again, roll out, cut into round cakes; when light, flatten with the hand or rolling pin; place a piece of butter on top and fold each over itself; when light, bake it in a quick oven.

STEWED MACARONI.—Break the macaroni into pieces an inch long, throw them into boiling water. Boil half an hour, and drain. Put into a stew-pan a pint of cream, an ounce of butter, one well-beaten egg, pepper and salt. Stir over a clear fire till it thickens, but do not boil; add the macaroni, boil five minutes, and serve hot.

APPLES AND BACON.—Cut some nice sweet bacon into thin slices, and fry almost to a crispness. Have prepared some greenings, pared, cored and sliced, and fry in the fat left in the pan from the bacon. The bacon should be kept hot until the apples are ready, when they should be taken and placed upon the slices of meat.

A RELISH FOR BREAKFAST.—Take one-half pound of fresh cheese, cut it in thin slices, put it in a frying-pan, turning over it a large cupful sweet milk; add one-fourth teaspoonful dry mustard, a pinch of salt and pepper, and a piece of butter the size of a butternut; stir the mixture all the time. Roll three Boston crackers very fine and sprinkle it gradually, and then turn at once into a warm dish; to be sent to the table immediately.

SCALLOPED EGGS.—Boil five or six eggs hard; chop them up roughly, make a white sauce, and mix all up together. Well butter and bread-crumb the scallop shell, put in a layer of chopped egg, then a layer of bread-crumbs and butter alternately until the shell is full. Finish with bread-crumbs on the top, and bake a light brown.

CHOCOLATE.—Scrape two sticks of chocolate and boil it in half a cup of water. Stir to a smooth paste. Sweeten a pint of milk with loaf-sugar, and, when boiling, pour on to the chocolate and let it boil together a few seconds, stirring it well.

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Serve immediately. Some persons prefer a little water instead of all milk. Sweeten a little cream and whip to a froth, and place on the top of each cup.

TONGUE TOAST.—Take cold boiled tongue, mince it fine, mix it with cream, and to every half pint of the mixture allow the well-beaten yolks of two eggs. Place over the fire, and let it simmer a minute or two. Have ready some nicely toasted bread; butter it, place on a hot dish and pour the mixture over. Send to table hot.

BAKED EGGS.—Have hot meat gravy in a pie-dish, break in the eggs; bake fifteen minutes.

CHEESE TOAST.—Cook three ounces of fine cut cheese, one well-beaten egg, one spoon butter and one-half cup new milk. When smooth pour the mixture over nicely browned toast.

SCRAMBLED EGGS.—Beat the eggs light, turn into a pan with bacon fried in dice, with fine chopped ham, parsley, or chipped dried beef, and stir rapidly until cooked.

CROQUETTES—Can be made of cold rice, barley, beans, potatoes, hash, or minced meat. They should be moulded a nice oval shape in flour, or rolled cracker and beaten egg, and fried an even brown; put them into very hot fat.

PAIN PERDU.—Cut stale bread into pretty shapes; dip it into egg and flour, fry in butter to a bright brown, sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.

YORKSHIRE PUDDING.—When roasting a piece of beef, lay it on sticks in your baking-pan, so that the juice from the meat will drop into the pan below. Three-quarters of an hour before the beef is done mix the following pudding and pour into the pan under the meat, letting the drippings continue to fall upon it: One pint milk, four eggs well beaten, two cups of flour, one teaspoon of salt.

MARROW DUMPLINGS.—Two eggs, two ounces beef-marrow, some crumbs of bread and a tablespoonful of flour. Beat the marrow to a cream; whisk the eggs and add them to the marrow. Well-soak the crumbs in boiling milk, beat them up and add to the other ingredients. Stir all well together, then form into small dumplings. Drop them into boiling broth and let them simmer for half an hour. They may be served in soup or with roast meat.

STEWED STEAK.—For this savory dish one pound sirloin steak, half an ounce butter, half an ounce flour, a little pepper and salt, half a pint of cold water, a tablespoonful of catsup and a few drops of caramel. To prepare the dish first make the butter very hot, and then put in the steak and brown it on both sides. The steak should be cut an inch in thickness. As soon as it is brown take it out of the frying-pan and put it into the stewpan. At the same time put half an ounce of flour into the frying-pan and stir it in with the butter, and add by degrees half a pint of cold water and stir well until it is mixed. Then add a little pepper and salt and pour it over the steak. Garnish it with fancy cut pieces of carrot and turnip, then cook as slowly as possible for an hour and a half and put it into a flat dish, when it is ready to be served.—*Miss Dods.*

CAKES.

APPLE SHORT CAKE.—Stew tender, juicy apples in a very little water until they are smooth and thick, then season them with sugar, a little butter and a pinch of salt. Make a short cake of a pint of flour sifted with two teaspoons of baking powder and a little salt. Rub a piece of butter half the size of an egg thoroughly into the flour and mix it into a soft dough with sweet milk, about a coffeecupful. Divide the dough into two equal parts; take one of these on to a floured board and

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roll into a sheet, handling as little as possible. Lay it into a medium-sized dripping pan and brush the surface very lightly with melted butter; then roll out the balance of the dough and lay it over the first piece. Bake in a very hot oven until done, then divide the cake, which will separate, without cutting, where it was buttered. Butter the lower half and spread it with a generous layer of the warm apple-sauce. Put on the balance of the cake, crust down; butter and spread it with apple-sauce and serve warm with sweet cream.

MEASURE CAKE.—Four teacups flour, two teacups sugar, one and one-half tea cups butter, one lemon, four eggs and one nutmeg.

SHREWSBURY CAKE.—One pound flour, twelve ounces sugar, one pound butter five eggs. Spices to taste.

SPONGE CAKE FOR WINTER.—One cupful flour, one cupful of sugar, two eggs, one teaspoonful of baking powder, one-half teacupful water; beat up quickly and bake.

POUND CAKE.—One pound flour, one pound sugar, one pound butter, eight eggs, three spoonfuls rose water, mace or other spice.

CHEAP POUND CAKE.—One cup sugar, one-half cup butter, one-third cup milk, three eggs, one and a half cups of flour, one teaspoonful baking powder.

MRS. HOLMES' LIBERTY CAKE.—One cup butter, two cups sugar, one cup milk, one and one-half pints of flour, three eggs, salt and spices, and three teaspoons Babbitt's yeast powders.

PORK CAKE.—One cup of chopped pork, one cupful of raisins, the same of molasses and milk, one teaspoonful each of salt and soda, and four cupfuls of flour.

GOLD CAKE.—The yolks of five eggs, one cup sugar, one cup rich cream, one teaspoonful soda, a pinch of salt, two cups of flour; season with vanilla.

SILVER CAKE.—Half cup butter, one and one-half cups white sugar, one-half cup sweet milk, the whites of five eggs, one-half teaspoonful soda, and one teaspoonful cream tartar.

FEATHER CAKE.—One cup of sugar, one-half cup of milk, one and one-half cups of flour, one tablespoonful of butter, one-half teaspoonful of soda, one tablespoonful of cream of tartar; flavor with lemon.

CLOVE CAKE.—One pound flour, one pound sugar, half-pound butter, one pound raisins, two eggs, teacupful sweet milk, one teaspoon saleratus, tablespoon cloves. tablespoon cinnamon and tablespoon nutmeg.

PUFF CAKE.—Three cupfuls of flour, three eggs, two cups of white sugar, one cup of milk, one cup of butter, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar and one spoonful of soda.

WIDOW'S CAKE.—Two cups Indian meal, three cups wheat flour, one pint butter milk, four tablespoons molasses, two teaspoons saleratus. To be eaten hot, with butter, for tea or breakfast.

HICKORY NUT CAKE.—Two teacups of sugar, one-half cup of butter, one cup of thin cream, three and one-half cups of flour, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder sifted through flour, six eggs beaten separately and one pint of chopped hickory nuts.

FRUIT CAKE.—One pound brown sugar, one of butter, ten eggs, one of flour. two of raisins and two of currants, half pound of citron, a nutmeg, tablespoon cloves, one of allspice, two teaspoons baking powder.

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A FRUIT CAKE.—A lady says the following is good, and she knows it: One pound brown sugar, one pound browned flour, three pounds seedless raisins, two pounds currants, one pound citron, three-fourths pound butter, one cup molasses, two teaspoons mace, two of cinnamon, one of cloves, one of black pepper, one nutmeg, one teaspoon soda, twelve eggs, one-half cup of currant jelly melted in one-half cup hot water. This cake will keep for years.

WHITE FRUIT CAKE.—One pound of sugar, the white of sixteen eggs, three-fourths of a pound of butter, two cocoanuts grated, one-half pound of almonds blanched and sliced thin, two pounds of dried citron cut thin, one teaspoonful of soda and two of cream of tartar dissolved in cream.

ICE CREAM CAKE.—One cup of butter, two cups of sugar, one cup of milk, three cups of flour, whites of five eggs, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder; bake in thin layers; three small cups of sugar, dissolved in a little water, and boiled until done for candy; cool a little, and pour over the unbeaten whites of eggs, and heat together half an hour. Put between the cakes.

QUEEN'S CAKE.—One pound of sugar, three-quarters of a pound of butter, one pound of flour, six eggs, mix together with milk; then add one-half pound of currants, one-half pound of raisins, one-quarter pound of citron, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, one-half teaspoonful of mace, two tablespoons lemon-juice. Bake for two hours.

JENNY LIND CAKE.—Two and a-half cups sugar, one cup butter, one cup milk, four cups flour, four eggs, two teaspoons baking powder; bake in three sheets, two plain; after taking out the two plain, leaving less than a third, add one cup raisins, one cup currants, one-half cup sliced citron, two teaspoons molasses, one teaspoon cloves, one teaspoon cinnamon, one grated nutmeg; spread with jelly and frost putting the fruit cake between the two plain. If the fruit cake seems a little thin, add a little more flour.

CHOCOLATE MARBLE CAKE.—One cup of butter, two cups powdered sugar, three cups flour, one cup sweet milk, four eggs, one and a-half teaspoonfuls soda, one of cream tartar sifted with the flour. When the cake is mixed, take out about a teacupful of the batter and stir into this a great spoonful of grated chocolate; wet with a scant tablespoonful of milk. Fill your mould about an inch deep with the yellow batter, then drop upon this a spoonful of the dark mixture, spreading it in broken circles upon the lighter surface. Proceed in this order until all is used.

TOUT FAIT.—For this nice dessert cake are required the yolks of four eggs, three tablespoonfuls of sugar, the same of flour, about two tablespoonfuls of milk and the juice of half a small lemon; the whites of three eggs are beaten to a stiff froth and mixed with the yolks, flour, etc., the compound then being put in a buttered pan and placed in a quick oven.

MOLASSES DOUGHNUTS.—Take one cup of molasses, two-thirds cup of milk, one egg and a piece of butter half the size of an egg, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar and one of soda. Grate in some nutmeg and use flour enough to roll out.

THIN GINGERBREAD.—Boil one quart of molasses twenty minutes, add immediately one teaspoonful soda, one cup of butter, ginger to taste, flour to make a paste to roll.

MATRIMONIES.—Three eggs, well beaten, a little salt, flour enough to mix hard; roll thin as paper; cut into fingers and give them a twist. Fry in hot lard—hotter than for common fried cakes.

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CHICAGO PUFFS.—Four cups of flour, four cups of new milk, four eggs, butter the size of a walnut; beat it as light as possible. Bake in cups about twenty-five minutes.

WAFERS.—Melt a quarter of a pound of butter and mix it with half a pint of milk, a teaspoonful of salt, three beaten eggs and sufficient sifted flour to enable you to roll them out easily. They should be rolled very thin, cut into small circular cakes and baked in an oven of moderate size. Frost the whole and sprinkle sugar-sand or comfits over it as soon as frosted.

SWEET CRACKERS.—One pound of flour, one-half pound of butter well-rubbed in; one-half pound powdered sugar, mix with the yolk of one egg, well beaten, and a glass of sweet wine; roll out the paste very thin, and cut out in any small shape you please.

GINGER CRACKERS.—One cup of sugar, one cup of lard, two cups of molasses, teaspoonful of soda, dissolved in a little warm water, flour enough to make a stiff dough, two tablespoonfuls of ginger; roll thin.

BLACK FRUIT CAKE.—One pound butter and one pound white sugar, beaten to a cream; beat well the yolks of twelve eggs, and stir all together; add half a pound of flour, stir in well; then one tablespoonful of cinnamon, two teaspoonfuls nutmeg, one teaspoonful cloves, stir well; then the beaten whites of the eggs, with another half pound of flour, one pound currants well washed and drained, one pound raisins seeded and chopped, one-half pound of citron cut in thin pieces; mix all together; this will make two cakes; bake two hours or longer; bake in deep tins lined with well-buttered paper.

Use no wine or brandy in cake-making; beat eggs light, always sift flour, and butter the cake tins.

PIES AND PUDDINGS.

APPLE POT PIE.—Make a crust, with half of it line the sides of a stew pan, having a close-fitting cover (a porcelain or granite one is the best). Fill the centre with peeled and sliced apples, and add to them a cupful of syrup, a pinch of ground cinnamon, another of salt, and a little butter, or use sugar and a little water instead of the syrup. Wet the edges of the crust and fit the balance of it over the top of the apples, being careful to have the saucepan only two-thirds full, in order to give room for rising. Put the cover on and boil for an hour without once lifting it, but be careful it does not stand in a place so hot as to burn. Cut the top crust into four equal parts, dish the apples and lay the crust from the sides; cut into even pieces, around the outer edge, and then the top crust over all, and serve hot.

PLUM PUDDING.—One pound butter, one pound sugar, one pound suet chopped fine, two and a half pounds flour. Prepare the fruit the day before; take two pounds raisins, seed, chop and rub in flour; two pounds currants; wash first in warm water; put in a colander to drain, then in two or three waters, cold; then spread out on a large dish to dry before the fire; when dry rub in flour. Quarter pound of citron sliced very thin, twelve eggs, one pint of milk, one table-spoonful cinnamon, one teaspoonful of cloves, one ditto nutmeg; mix the butter and sugar, beat the yolks smooth and light, and add them. Next, add the milk, then the flour, alternately with the beaten whites, then spices, lastly the fruit well dredged with flour. Mix all thoroughly, wring your pudding cloth out of hot water, flour well inside, put in the pudding and boil five hours.

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DORCHESTER PUDDING.—Half a pound of bread crumbs grated, half a pound of suet finally chopped, half a pound of sugar, two eggs, one pot of marmalade (orange). To be boiled five hours in a mould. Sauce: Three ounces of butter and three ounces of sugar to be beaten well together; beat all to a paste, and put it on the top of the pudding just before it goes to table.

CARROT PUDDING.—Half pound each of grated carrots and sweet potatoes, half pound chopped beef-suet, half a pound each of raisins and currants seeded and chopped fine, half pound stale bread crumbs, one-quarter of a pound sugar, teaspoon salt, grated lemon peel and spice to taste. Boil in a mould or bag four hours. Serve hot with rich sauce. This is a winter dessert, and a nice, inexpensive pudding.

SNOW PUDDING.—Soak half a box of gelatine in a teacup of cold water, pour on it one pint of boiling water; set in a cool place, but do not let it harden. Beat the whites of three eggs, to which add three cups of sugar and the juice of two lemons; mix with gelatine and pour into moulds to harden; serve with cream.

RICE.—Cut cold rice in slices, dip in beaten egg, fry brown, dress with sugar and cinnamon.

APPLE JONATHAN.—Line the sides only of a pudding dish with some nice paste, and fill it full of juicy, tender apples, peeled and sliced, with a little water to keep them moist. Cover the top of the dish with paste and bake until the apples are soft, then remove the crust and mash the apples while hot, adding sugar, butter, grated nutmeg and a little flavoring if desired. When cool, serve with rich cream, sweetened, flavored and whipped to a stiff froth, or the cream may be used without whipping. Either way the dish is delicious, and peach Jonathan made in the same manner is better still. Peaches will need no water if they are ripe and juicy.

OPEN TARTS.—The ingredients are ten ounces flour, five ounces butter, one and a half gill cold water, half a teaspoonful yeast powder, a few teaspoonfuls of preserves of any kind and a pinch of salt.

First, weigh out the butter and flour, and put them in a bowl, adding a pinch of salt. Mix the butter and flour together lightly and put in the yeast powder. These must be mixed well together, making a nice dough, with a gill and a half of cold water. Use as little water as possible, the quantity of water to be determined by the quality of the flour. A fine grade of flour absorbs the greatest quantity of water. Roll out the dough and cut it into circular pieces with a cake cutter. The remainder of the dough is rolled out again and smaller circular pieces cut out, and with a part of dough that is still left make small narrow strips. There is still sufficient dough to make a thin covering for a plate or flute dish. The dish should first be wet with cold water, and the dough lining pressed closely to the edges of the dish. Then put in the centre the jam, and take the white of an egg and wet the edges, after which lay on the narrow strips over the top. Now put on the smaller pieces of dough and bake them in a quick oven for twenty-five minutes.—*Miss Dods.*

RAISIN PIE.—Take one pound of raisins, turn over them one quart of boiling water. Keep adding so there will be a quart when done. Grate the rind of one lemon into a cup of sugar, three teaspoonfuls of flour and one egg; mix well together; turn the raisins over the mixture, stirring the while. This makes three pies. Bake as other pies.

LEMON PIE.—Grate the yellow rind of two lemons; beat together the rind, juice,

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ten tablespoonfuls of loaf sugar, and the yolks of four eggs, until very light; then add two tablespoonfuls of water. Line a large plate and fill with the mixture; bake until the paste is done; beat the whites stiff and stir into them two tablespoonfuls of sugar, spread it over the top and bake a bright brown.

APPLE PUDDING.—One cup milk, one egg, one teaspoon cream tartar, one-half teaspoon soda; flour to make a batter. Pour this over quartered apples and steam two hours. Sweet sauce.

OMELET.—Make a nice omelet, when one side is cooked spread with preserves and fold down; sprinkle with sugar.

CHEAP PUDDING.—Peel and core four or five apples, according to their size, cut them in slices, and lay them in a pie-dish; sprinkle them with sugar (pounded), and then put a thin layer of apricot or other jam. Take two ounces of arrowroot; mix it with a pint of milk, a little sugar and a small piece of butter; stir it over the fire until it boils, and then pour it into the pie-dish with the apples and jam, and bake until done.

COTTAGE BAKED PUDDING.—Two eggs, two cupfuls of sugar, half a cupful of butter, one teaspoonful of soda sifted in two cupfuls of flour, and three cupfuls of buttermilk. Stir this last into the flour, etc., and mix lightly. Bake an hour in a pudding dish.

FLUMMERY.—Lay sponge cake in a deep dish, pour on white wine to moisten it; chop some raisins fine and sprinkle over the cake; then spread over it a layer of jelly and turn over it a custard made with the yolks of eggs. Beat the reserved whites to a froth and spread over the top. Put a dash of red sugar sand here and there over it or tiny drops of jelly. Slices of orange, cut very thin, make a good garnish for it.

BATTER AND APPLES.—Pare and core six apples, and stew them for a short time with a little sugar, make a batter in the usual way, beat in the apples and pour the pudding into a buttered pie-dish. The pudding, when properly done, should rise up quite light, with the apples on top. To be eaten at table with butter and moist sugar.

GERMAN PUFFS.—Three eggs, one pint milk, one large spoonful flour, a little salt, one teaspoon butter; leave out the whites of two of these eggs, and beat to a stiff froth, with two heaping tablespoons sugar; spread it over the top and brown it.

CREME—One pint milk boiled with flavoring, for five minutes, have mixed four ounces sugar, four egg-yolks, pour on the boiling milk *slowly*. Strain into a pan and set in a vessel of boiling water, cook until it shakes in the middle, flavor with chocolate, coffee, vanilla, lemon or fruit. Cool on ice if possible.

APPLE MERINGUE.—Stew apples; dry with butter, sugar and spice; put in a dish when nearly cold and cover with a cake frosting. Bake three minutes; eat with cream.

PARSNIP PIE.—Take twelve parsnips, three onions and six potatoes already boiled; slice fine and add half a pound of butter, half a pound of fat pork (cut small and already cooked), season with pepper, mix with a little water and boil a few minutes. Take up and bake slowly in a deep dish between two rich crusts. An excellent pie for autumn and winter time.

BREAD PUDDING.—Butter a baking dish; sprinkle the bottom with raisins; butter a few slices of bread; lay over the raisins (have enough slices to cover the custard): one quart of milk and six eggs; beat well together; add two-thirds cup

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white sugar; pour over bread when done; turn on another dish cut in slices when cold.

Bread Pudding.—Unfermented brown bread, two ounces; milk, half a pint; one egg; sugar, quarter of an ounce. Cut the bread into slices, and pour the milk over it boiling hot; let it stand till well soaked, and stir in the egg and sugar, well beaten, with a little grated nutmeg, and bake or steam for one hour.

Crumb Pie.—Line a plate with nice paste. Rub together one-half cup flour, three-quarters cup brown sugar, one large tablespoon butter until it grains. Fill the pie and bake fifteen minutes. This is excellent.

Dessert Pudding.—One cupful of sour buttermilk; two tablespoonfuls of fried meat drippings, or the same of melted butter; one scant teaspoonful of soda; a pinch of salt; one cup and a half of flour; stir together into a batter. Have ready two or three large apples; pare and slice them on a buttered tin and pour the butter over them. Bake half an hour; serve warm, with sugar; and cream, or vinegar sauce.

Dark Steamed Pudding.—To be steamed two and a half or three hours—one cupful molasses, one cupful sweet milk, two cupfuls butter, four cupfuls flour, one teaspoonful soda, three-quarters cupful fruit; spice to suit the taste; to be eaten with sour sauce.

Apple Custard.—Take half a dozen tart, mellow apples, pare and quarter them and take out the cores; put them in a pan with half a teacup of water; set them on a few coals; when they begin to grow soft turn them into a pudding-dish and sprinkle sugar on them; beat eight eggs with rolled brown sugar; mix them with three pints of milk; grate in half a nutmeg and turn the whole over the apples: bake the custard between twenty and thirty minutes.

Extra Mince Pie.—Two pounds of lean beef, boiled, and when cold chopped fine; one pound of beef-suet, chopped very fine; five pounds of apples, pared, cored and chopped; one pound of Sultana raisins, washed; two pounds of raisins, seeded and chopped; two pounds of currants, washed in several waters; three-quarters of a pound of citron, cut fine; two tablespoonfuls citron, one grated nutmeg, two table-spoonfuls of mace, one of ground cloves, the same of allspice and salt, two and one-half pounds of brown sugar, one quart of sweet cider: let it stand twenty-four hours before making up in pies. If the mince-meat made after this recipe is kept in stone jars, well covered up and in a cool place, it will keep all winter: if it becomes dried out add more liquor. Another.—Four pounds raisins, two pounds currants, two pounds citron, two pounds suet, two pounds beef, two pounds sugar, one and a half pints vinegar, one quart cider, one ounce mace, one ounce cinnamon, one nutmeg, one quart apples.

Perfect Pies.—Cut nice pie-paste into squares; on each square pile one pinch flour, cinnamon and sugar, a bit of butter and a teaspoon of molasses. Wet the edges, fold over quickly, pinch closely, and bake for fifteen minutes. Very good.

SAUCES AND DRESSINGS.

Lobster Sauce.—Pound the spawn and two anchovies; pour on them two spoonfuls of gravy; strain all into some melted butter; then put in the meat of the lobster, cut up; give it all one boil and add a squeeze of a lemon.

Cabbage Salad.—One egg, one teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of sugar, a half teaspoonful of mustard, a quarter teaspoonful of pepper, two-thirds of a cup of

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vinegar; beat all together and boil in a bowl over the steam of a kettle till quite thick; then turn the mixture over a small half head of cabbage chopped fine; if too thick add cold vinegar. To be eaten when cold.

FRENCH MUSTARD.—Slice an onion in a bowl; cover with good vinegar. After two days pour off the vinegar; add to it a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper, a teaspoonful of salt, a tablespoonful of sugar and mustard enough to thicken; mix. Set on the stove and stir till it boils. When cold it is fit for use.

DRAWN BUTTER.—Melt one ounce of butter in a small saucepan, and then throw in the dry flour, which mixes instantly. Then add one gill of milk and stir until it boils, then add one gill of cream. Let them boil two minutes so as to swell the grains of flour; then add the yolks of two eggs chopped fine.

SAUCE FOR ROAST BEEF.—Grate horseradish on a grater into a basin, add two tablespoonfuls of cream, with a little mustard and salt, mix well together; add four tablespoonfuls of the best vinegar, and mix the whole thoroughly. The vinegar and cream are both to be cold.

SALAD DRESSING WITHOUT OIL.—Take the yolks of two hard-boiled eggs, and rub them quite smooth in a mortar; add a teaspoonful of mustard, a little cayenne with black pepper and salt to taste, and four or five tablespoonfuls of cream; lastly, add a tablespoonful of vinegar, mix well, and it is ready. Of course it is much better with olive oil, but there are yet people in the world who reject it.

FOAMING SAUCE.—Beat a cup of sugar with a quarter of a pound of butter until it is light and creamy; add the well-beaten yolk of an egg, then the white cut to a stiff froth and beat vigorously. Stir in a wine-glass of water and flavoring. Set the bowl over the tea-kettle until the mixture is the thickness of cream; on no account allow it to boil or the sauce will be spoiled.

DRIED BEEF GRAVY.—Shave very thinly one-half teacupful of beef, put over it one quart of cold water; set on top of stove; let it simmer one or two hours; thicken with one and one-half tablespoonfuls of flour mixed with cold water, and butter size of walnut; salt to taste.

CELERY SALT.—Save the root of the celery plant, dry and grate it, mixing it with one-third as much salt. Keep in a bottle well corked, and it is delicious for soups, oysters, gravies or hashes.

PRUNE WHIP.—Sweeten to taste, and stew three-fourths of a pound of prunes; when perfectly cold add whites of four eggs beaten stiff; stir all this together till light; put in a dish and bake twenty minutes; when cold serve in a larger dish and cover with whipped cream.

SOYER SAUCE.—One spoon mustard; one spoon olive oil; one-half cup catsup.

FAVORITE SAUCE.—Rind of one lemon sliced very thin, juice of the lemon, one spoon sugar, two spoons olive oil, two spoons mustard.

MIXED SAUCE.—Three apples chopped fine, two onions, one seeded cucumber, two green peppers, three tomatoes; chop well, mix with salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar, a little sugar.

CARROT SAUCE.—Soak thin sliced carrots for two hours in cold water (ice water is best); put in a pan with one pound of sugar and one cup of water; boil to a clear syrup; add juice of one lemon and boil for five minutes.

PLAIN PUDDING SAUCE.—Three tablespoons sugar, three tablespoons vinegar, one spoon butter, one spoon flour; mix well, and pour over them three-fourths of a pint of boiling water, cook for five minutes. Sprinkle with nutmeg or cinnamon.

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STEWARDS' SAUCE.—One pound butter beaten to a cream, one ounce chopped parsley, two ounces chopped chives, the juice of one lemon; mix and serve cold for fish or meat.

FISH SAUCE.—Boil two eggs hard; pound the yolks smooth. Boil for five minutes a few sprigs of chives, parsley, thyme and summer savory; strain this water on the mashed yolks and add one teaspoon each salt, sugar, mustard and black pepper, then four tablespoons olive oil and two of vinegar.

BREAD SAUCE.—Crumb white bread fine, stew one-half cup crumbs in one pint milk, add pepper, salt and nutmeg, also one spoon butter; serve with roast game.

BUTTER SAUCE.—One-half cup flour mixed into a smooth paste; stir this into half a pint of boiling water, add a little salt and stir steadily three minutes; remove from the fire and add one tablespoon butter, juice of one lemon, one tablespoon chopped parsley; keep it hot for five minutes on the back of the stove, but on no account let it boil. Use for mackerel.

For pudding sauces in winter nothing can be nicer than *fruit-juice sauce.* When canning fruit in the summer, small quantities of juice are frequently left over from filling the jars. Add to such juice a little sugar, let it come to a boil and bottle it in any small vials which will just hold the quantity on hand; put in a clean cork, shave it level with the bottle and cover it with sealing wax, or common wax and a bit of cloth. Two or three dozen such bottles, holding from an ounce to a pint of juice, are invaluable in the winter. To make this sauce put your fruit juice, and a little water, or none according to quantity and strength of flavor, in a cup and let it come to a boil: have mixed to a cream a spoonful of sugar and a spoonful of flour, stir these in the boiling juice and boil until of the right consistency; remove from the fire and add a spoonful of butter, stirring until it is dissolved. This is a cheap, healthful and easily made sauce, while its chief ingredient is one often thrown away, "because the fruit jars are full."

IMPORTANT RECIPES.

EXCELLENT BREAD.—Bread is called the staff of life. If a table lacks good bread it is a poor table, no matter how great the variety and excellence of the other articles of food. Both hot bread and bread made quickly of soda in the form of biscuits are unwholesome for common use. Invalids and children should never eat fresh bread. Some families bake twice a week, some but once: if bread is baked too frequently dyspepsia and biliousness are likely to prevail in the family. Every mistress of a family should know how to make and bake *good* bread, and should insist upon having only good bread on her table. The requisites for good bread-making are care, absolute cleanliness, good flour and good hop-yeast: these are about equally requisite, and if any one be lacking the result is bad bread. A stone

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jar or wooden bowl is best for setting bread sponge; these should be used for nothing else, and should be kept well scoured and sunned. Beat the sponge with a wooden beater. Set the sponge over night. In winter set it about six o'clock in the afternoon, and keep it warm near the stove over night. In summer set sponge about nine or ten o'clock in the evening, and keep it in a cool place—not a cellar or spring-house—so that it may rise without becoming sour. To set bread, put two or three quarts of flour—according to your family—in a stone jar and pour *boiling* water over it, beating it smoothly until it is an even, tolerably thick paste. When this is lukewarm add to it one cup of hop-yeast and one tablespoon of salt. In the morning this will foam like soapsuds; pour this foaming sponge into a kneading bowl or pan of flour, and, using enough flour to make a good smooth dough, work it not less than twenty minutes, half an hour is better. When this has been kept covered in a moderately warm place until light, you will find on tearing off a piece of the top that it is full of cells, honeycombed. At once knead it into loaves, using only flour enough to work it; knead it at this time about ten minutes, or until the gas in the dough stops cracking and puffing; put it in buttered pans, and let it become light once more. Be careful that it does not stand too long and begin to ferment. See that the oven is not so hot as to form a crust at *first*, for the bread should continue to rise after entering the oven, and a speedy crust makes it tough. Increase the oven heat after twenty minutes. Let it bake from an hour to an hour and a half, according to size of loaves. Have a nice even brown, sides, top and bottom.

Hop-Yeast.—Boil a large handful of hops in a quart of water, keeping them well covered. Have in a pan a pint of flour and three mashed Irish potatoes, pour the boiling hop-water on these and stir smooth. When lukewarm add one cup of yeast. Let it rise from six to twelve hours; then add a small handful of salt and stir it down; in three or four hours more put it in a closely covered, perfectly sweet stone jar or jug, and keep in a cool, dry, dark place.

Coffee.—Never buy ground coffee. When about to make coffee take the brown berries and heat them *hot*, then grind while hot; have your coffee-pot clean, empty, dry, allow no cold coffee or old grounds. Put the dry coffee in the pot, and pour over it as much *boiling, hard boiling* water as you want coffee. If you have a French pot with a sieve in the middle, keep it securely fastened up, stand it where it will be hot but *not* boil for ten minutes, and your coffee will be all right. But suppose that you have no French pot? Tie your ground coffee loosely in a bit of lace-net, or tarlatane, or very thin swiss mull, put it in the coffee-pot, pour on the boiling water as before, put a tight cork in the *spout*, and see that the lid fits closely, put a cloth in it if it does not, and let it stand back for ten minutes as before. The idea is to keep all the aroma-charged steam *in* the coffee-pot, and have the subtle oil of the berries in your coffee-pot, and not pervading all the house, wandering out of doors and regaling the neighbors, while you are dolefully drinking brown warm water.

Tea.—Use a brown earthen tea-pot, and dare to bring it to the table. Put your *dry* tea into this *dry* pot; cover it and let it stand on the back of the stove till pot and tea are *hot:* this releases the aromatic oil of the leaves. Now pour on the *boiling* water, as much as you want tea; cover it closely. In Scotland they use a close wadded bag called a *cosey* to cover the pot, and it is a valuable invention. Never boil tea, black or green; heat the leaves, steep in boiling water, and keep the steam in the pot and the tea will be excellent.

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LEMONADE.—This is a very important drink during our hot summers. If freely used in the spring there would be far less of biliousness and fevers of which to complain. It is more wholesome when only moderately sweet. Roll the lemons, divide in halves, and squeeze them into your lemonade pitcher. Then slice the halves into the pitcher, strewing them as you drop them in with granulated sugar. Let the lemons and sugar lie for an hour, this extracts the flavor of the rinds. A bit of ice laid on top of lemons and sugar improves them. After an hour or so add what water you want for lemonade, stir well for five minutes, and then it is ready for drinking, all the oil and acid of the fruit being set free.

FRUIT CREAM.—Pound up one quart of fruit, raspberries or strawberries are best, but any other will do. Strain through a sieve; add three-fourths of a pound of white sugar; beat well. Put in a pint and a half of cream, and beat hard for fifteen minutes; when it is all a thick foam put it into goblets for dessert.

BROWN BREAD.—One quart brown flour, one quart Indian meal, one coffee-cup of molasses, one heaping spoonful of soda in one quart of buttermilk, one egg, if too thin add a little rye or wheat flour, bake in one big loaf three hours.

DISHES FOR INVALIDS.

BEEF TEA.—Cut all the fat from a pound of fresh beef; then cut the lean meat into small dice-like pieces; add one pint of cold water to draw out the juices; boil twenty or thirty minutes, skimming it carefully; then strain and salt to taste. Another, better for the very sick, or for weak stomach: put the cut beef, prepared as above, into a wide-mouthed bottle, cork it so no water can enter; place it in a kettle of cold water; prop it so that it will stand firmly, and boil one hour; then set the kettle aside to cool; when cold you can safely remove the bottle, and you have the simple juice or essence of the beef.

CHICKEN PANADA.—Skin the chicken and cut it up in joints. Take all the meat off the bones, and cut up into small pieces; put it in a jar with a little salt, tie it down, and set it in a saucepan of boiling water. It should boil from four to six hours; then pass it through a sieve with a little of the broth. It could be made in a hurry in two hours, but it is better when longer time is allowed. Do not put the wings in the panada.

SOUP FOR AN INVALID.—Cut in small pieces one pound of beef or mutton, or a part of both; boil it gently in two quarts of water; take off the scum, and, when reduced to a pint, strain it. Season with a little salt, and take a teacupful at a time.

EGG CREAM.—Beat a raw egg to a stiff froth; add a tablespoonful of white sugar, and half a glass of *home-made* blackberry or black cherry wine; beat well, add half a glass of cream; beat thoroughly and use at once. This is a full meal for an invalid, and is especially good where trouble of throat, mouth or stomach prevents solid food being used.

GRUEL.—Mix a tablespoonful of corn meal with a little cold water; add a small pinch of salt, and stir it smoothly into part of a pint of boiling water, and let it boil; being constantly stirred for six or eight minutes. If sugar is desired, put it in with the cold meal and water, but add any flavor, as nutmeg or cinnamon, after removing it from the stove. Gruel should be very smooth, and should not have the faintest suspicion of a scorch about it. Always serve it neatly.

RICE CREAM.—Grind rice to a very fine flour; stir it with a little cold milk and a

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pinch of salt. Have a pint of milk boiling slowly, and stir in the rice smoothed in cold milk; add sugar and flavor to taste; stir all the time until it is done; turn it into a white dish. Now take the white of one egg and whip it to a froth; add pulverized sugar to make as for cake frosting; spread it smoothly over your rice, and set in the oven for three minutes. This is nice cold with cream, or warm served with currant jelly.

DRINKS FOR INVALIDS.—Mash any kind of fruit, currants, tamarinds, berries pour *boiling* water on them. In ten minutes strain it off, sweeten, cool; add a little ice, if possible. Do not allow this drink to *stand in* the sick-chamber, keep it in a cool, airy place.

Boiling water poured over browned flour, or browned wheat or corn, or evenly toasted bread, and treated as above, is also a wholesome, agreeable drink for the sick. Sage, balm, and sorrel mixed and put with half a sliced lemon, and treated as above, is a valuable drink in fevers.

CREAM OF TARTAR DRINK.—Two spoonfuls cream of tartar, the grated rind of a lemon, half a cup of loaf sugar, and one pint of boiling water, is a good summer drink for invalids, and is cleansing to the blood.

OATMEAL GRUEL is made as corn-meal gruel, but boiled longer.

PANADA.—Sprinkle large soda crackers with white sugar and nutmeg; then pour on a little more boiling water than the crackers will absorb. This is a pleasant dish if dressed with a frosting as the rice cream, or covered with strawberries and sifted sugar.

BARLEY GRUEL.—Boil the barley three or four hours in plenty of water, then when the water is white and glutinous, strain it off and add a little loaf sugar, and a very little salt. This is exceedingly nourishing, and is good for infants.

Among the articles to be recommended for invalids we have rice, sago, tapioca, corn and oatmeal, stewed fruits, tomatoes, broiled tender beef, *rare;* beef-tea, broth and soup of mutton or fowl; chocolate, lemonade, gelatine, baked apples, brown bread, milk toast, baked potatoes.

Invalids should have no fried, hard or greasy food, no pastry, no rich cakes, no old-fashioned rich preserves.

WHEAT FRUMITY.—Boil wheat to a jelly. To one quart wheat jelly add one quart milk, three eggs; sweeten and flavor to taste; scald together, and use hot or cold.

RAW EGGS.—Persons suffering from dyspepsia can often digest raw eggs when the stomach is too weak to receive and retain anything else. They are always very nourishing and strength-giving

DRIED FLOUR FOR INFANTS.—Take one teacupful of flour, tie it up tightly in a close muslin bag, and put it in a pot of cold water and boil three hours; then take it out and dry the outside. When used, grate it. One tablespoonful is enough for one teacupful of milk (which would be better with a little water); wet the flour with a little cold water and stir into the milk; add a very little salt and boil five minutes.

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CANDY.

COCOANUT CANDY.—Grate the meat of a cocoanut, and having ready two pounds of finely sifted sugar (white) and the beaten whites of two eggs, also the milk of the nut, mix altogether and make into little cakes. In a short time the candy will be dry enough to eat.

TO SUGAR OR CRYSTALLIZE POPCORN.—Put into an iron kettle one tablespoonful of butter, three tablespoonfuls of water and one teacupful of white sugar; boil until ready to candy, then throw in three quarts of corn, nicely popped; stir briskly until the candy is evenly distributed over the corn; set the kettle from the fire, and stir until it has cooled a little, and you have each grain separate and crystallized with the sugar; care should be taken not to have too hot a fire lest you scorch the corn when crystallized. Nuts of any kind prepared in this way are delicious.

A DELICIOUS FRUIT CANDY is made by adding chopped raisins and figs to a syrup made by stewing two pounds of sugar with the juice of two lemons, or, if lemons are not at hand, with a cupful of vinegar flavored with essence of lemon. Dried cherries and any firm preserves may be used instead of raisins and figs.

COCOANUT BALLS.—One-half cupful butter, one cupful sugar, one half cupful sweet milk, two cupfuls flour, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, salt, three eggs, the whites of two taken out for icing. Frosting: Whites of two eggs beaten to a stiff froth with egg-beater; then, a teaspoonful at a time, add twenty teaspoonfuls powdered sugar, stirring it in with a knife. Bake cake in jelly-cake tins; spread each cake with icing, and sprinkle each evenly and thickly with desiccated cocoanut.

CARAMELS.—With the advent of cold weather there are certain kinds of sweets which are popular, among which are caramels. The following is an excellent and reliable receipt: Three pounds of brown sugar, one-half pound Baker's chocolate, one-half pound of butter, two tablespoons of molasses, same quantity of vinegar, one cup of cream or milk. Boil twenty-five minutes; when off the fire add vanilla. Beat ten minutes to granulate, or if crisp is preferred, do not beat.

BARLEY SUGAR.—Soak one quart barley five minutes in hot water; drain; stew the barley in china with four quarts water, until very soft; mash, strain, cool to a jelly, add one cup sugar, one ounce butter; stew ten or fifteen minutes and cool. More sugar may be needed.

BUTTER SCOTCH.—Two large cups brown sugar, one-half cup butter, one-half cup water; cook until it snaps or strings as poured from the spoon; pour thin upon buttered plates, and when nearly cold score it in squares.

MOLASSES CANDY.—Boil the molasses slowly, stirring all the time; when nearly done add one teaspoon butter, one spoon brown sugar, one pinch soda. Try it by dropping in water.

PEA-NUT CANDY.—Shell the pea-nuts and rub off the brown skins; almost fill a pan or plate with them; pour on the molasses candy made as above, or sugar candy as in the following recipe.

SUGAR CANDY.—Three cups dark-brown sugar, a little gum arabic or white of egg; stir in one-half cup of cold water, boil slowly, stirring constantly, skim the dark foam off. Test it by a few drops thrown into a cup of cold water; when nearly done, add a pinch of soda, and a teaspoon of butter. Beet sugar will not make good candy.

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CHOCOLATE CANDY.—Make as for butter scotch, using only one large teaspoon of butter, and a cup of grated chocolate, or one chocolate cake broken into bits.

CANDIED FRUITS.—Make as for sugar candy; when almost done drop in figs, sections of oranges or lemons, stoned prunes or dates, or wedges of citron; dip out separately in five minutes, taking up syrup with each, lay on a buttered dish.

GENERAL RECIPES FOR CLEANING.

ANTS of all kinds, also roaches, can be expelled by using powdered borax. If soot gets on a carpet, sprinkle salt on it, and with a dustpan and stiff brush you can remove all the soot; repeat, if necessary, three times.

FOR CLEANING CARPETS.—To one gallon of water add two tablespoonfuls of spirits of hartshorn. Wring out clean flannel cloths in this mixture, and rub the carpet with the damp cloth. See that the cloth is not too wet, and dry the carpet with a dry cloth.

TO CLEAN A NURSERY CARPET.—Have a pail of very warm water; throw in a tablespoonful of powdered borax; then, with a clean scrubbing brush and very little if any soap, scrub well the soiled places; rinse with clean hot water, and rub very dry with a clean, soft cloth. If possible, open the windows to dry quickly.

TO CLEANSE GLASS GLOBES.—If the globes on gas fixtures are much stained on the outside by smoke, soak them in tolerably hot water in which a little washing soda has been dissolved. Then put a teaspoonful of powdered ammonia in a pan of lukewarm water, and with a hard brush scrub the globes until the smoke stains disappear. Rinse in clean cold water. They will be as white as if new.

WASHING TIDIES.—I will tell you how to wash your tidies worked with worsted and white Java canvas. Wash in cold water. Cistern water is preferable. Make a little suds with hard soap, rinse thoroughly, and blue. Never put worsted in warm water.

IF those interested in blacking stoves will try greasing them with fresh grease before blacking, they will find that it prevents them from rusting. Add a pinch of brown sugar to blacking just before applying. This causes it to stick, and it polishes much easier and with half the usual rubbing.

If a stove is well rubbed every day with a newspaper, the blacking will long remain on.

NEW KETTLES.—To remove the iron taste from new kettles, boil a handful of hay in them, and repeat the process, if necessary. Hay water is a great sweetener of tin, wooden and iron ware. In Irish dairies everything used for milk is scalded with hay water.

EMBROIDERY.—Embroidery silks should be dipped in weak ammonia before using in order to set the color, and articles embroidered or knit in worsted should never be washed in anything stronger than bran and water. A little ox gall mixed with the water will keep the colors from running, unless the work is rubbed or wrung.

IF PICTURES are hung by worsted cord, brush it often with the broom that is kept for walls. Lambrequins, if of woollen fabric, ought to be brushed every few days.

THE BEST GLOVE CLEANER.—Mix one-fourth ounce carbonate of ammonia, one-fourth ounce fluid chloroform, one-fourth ounce sulphuric ether, one quart distilled benzine. Pour out a small quantity in a saucer, put on gloves and wash as if

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washing the hands, changing solution until gloves are clean; take off, squeeze them, replace on hands and with a clean cloth rub fingers, etc., until they are dry and perfectly fitted to the hand. This is also an excellent clothes, ribbon and silk cleaner; is perfectly harmless to the most delicate tints. Apply with a soft sponge, rubbing gently until spots disappear. Care must be taken not to use it near fire, as the benzine is very inflammable.

To Wash Silk.—Silk will wash as follows: Mix quarter of a pound of honey, quarter of a pound of soft soap and a gill of gin; lay each breadth of silk on wooden table, scrub it well with a brush and this mixture, then dip it successively in two pails of soft water; do not wring it, but hang it thus to dry, and iron between paper when sufficiently dry.

To Clean White Fur.—Take a clean piece of flannel, and with some heated bran rub the fur well, when it will be quite renewed. The bran should be heated in a moderate oven, for a hot oven will scorch the bran and will brown the fur. Oatmeal is preferable to bran, if procurable with no husks. Dried flour will also answer the purpose.

To Wash Hair Brushes.—It is best to clean two at a time, in this way: First comb them well, to remove the loose hair or dust; then dip the bristles only in very warm water, sprinkle each brush with plenty of powdered borax and rub the two together; after they are thoroughly cleansed have a pitcher of hot water and pour it over the bristles. Keep the back of the brush as dry as possible. Shake the water well out and dry quickly in the sun. Brushes washed in this way will retain their stiffness.

Combs and Brushes should be kept well cleaned. A very easy method is to scour them in strong warm ammonia water, shake well, and dry in the sun in the open air.

Dish Washing.—I am truly sorry for those young housekeepers who hate to wash greasy dishes. A few directions which I will give, simple as they seem, will, if followed, help to lessen the disagreeableness of this dreaded duty. I would fill the dish pan half full, or nearly so, with water as hot as you can bear the hands in. Take enough soap to make a slight suds; put in the dishes, having a clean dish cloth. Wash them and turn them into a pan, and pour hot water over them; then turn them into another pan to drain; take another clean dish towel to wipe them with, and they will wipe so quickly and easily you will be surprised. If you will put water into the pots and kettles as soon as emptied, they will be soaked so that they will wash easily by the time you are ready for them.

Smoke stained Walls.—Wash the walls with a common whitewash brush, dipped in a solution of ten cents' worth of pulverized white vitriol dissolved in two quarts of cold water. It may take more than that to wash over thoroughly the smoke-stained walls; but that is the right proportion (ten cents' worth of white vitriol to two quarts of cold water). Let it dry over night, and the next day put on a whitewash made as follows: Put a twenty-cent package of white rock lime into a pail, then fill the pail with hot water. Cover up closely, and let it steam until the lime is entirely dissolved, stirring occasionally. When dissolved add to the wash five cents' worth of painter's blue. Stir all thoroughly together, and apply with a common whitewash brush. It will not rub off, and is as clear and white as the finest kalsomining. One twenty-cent package of white rock lime will make wash enough to whiten three rooms 14 by 10.—*Mrs. H. W. Beecher.*

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To Clean Black Cloth or Silk.—Sponge with warm water, or coffee with ammonia in it; press on the wrong side. If the silk is thin, add a little sugar to the cleaning water.

To Remove Grease Spots.—Saturate with ammonia and press with a hot iron over brown paper.

One ounce of borax, dissolved in a pint of boiling water, is also excellent for removing grease spots.

Borax Water, as above, with the addition of a few drops of oil of myrrh, or spirits of camphor, is far better for the teeth than any bought dentifrice; it keeps them clean and sound.

Remove white spots from furniture by rubbing with camphene. Scratches can be taken from varnish by rubbing with kerosene. A bruise will yield to a hot iron pressed over wet flannel. Unvarnished furniture can be polished with beeswax and turpentine. Clean glass with ammonia. Clean wall-paper with stale bread. The most obdurate stains in white goods, as ink or fish-blood, can be removed by soaking the article in sour milk for several days, rubbing well each morning and changing the milk; keep it in the sun meanwhile. Salt and lemon rubbed on rust stains will generally remove them; half an ounce of oxalic acid in a pint of soft water, kept well corked, is a good mixture for removing rust stains. It is *very poisonous*, and should be well washed from the goods. This preparation is dangerous to keep where there are servants or children, for fear of accidents.

Tar, pitch and turpentine can be removed by soaking in sweet oil, or melted tallow, or lard. Paint can be removed by rubbing with spirits of turpentine.

Ink of any color can be entirely removed from the most delicate rug or carpet, by the following process: sop the ink up gently with a soft cloth—*don't rub it in.* Then, if in winter, heap snow on the place, and as fast as it blackens—don't let it melt—brush it up and put on fresh snow. It will extract the ink. In summer instead of the snow, use *ice*. Lay a lump on the inked place, turn it, renew it, do not let it melt and run into the carpet.

Ribbons and Silk can be cleaned by sponging with lukewarm suds, rubbing both sides, and dry by winding very tight around a bottle.

White Clothes which have yellowed from lying should be wrung out of suds and laid on the grass in the sun for several days. When washing, hang up all the clothes wrong side out, the white ones in broad sunshine, the colored ones *always* in the shade. *Blankets* are better dried on a windy, cloudy day. *Calicoes* should be washed in a thin perfectly clean suds—not in the suds after white clothes; rub no soap on them, but rinse in one clear water and one bluing water.

When any kind of cotton or linen clothing is laid away for a few months, it should neither be blued, starched nor ironed, but well washed and rinsed through two clear waters and put away rough-dry and neatly folded; this preserves the color and fibre of the goods so that they last much longer.

House Insects, etc.—No insect which usually infests the house and crawls over the floors or wood work can live under the application of hot alum water. It will destroy red and black ants, cockroaches, spiders and chinchbugs. Take two pounds of alum and dissolve it in three or four quarts of boiling water. Let it stand on the fire until the alum is all melted, then apply it with a brush (while nearly boiling hot) to every joint and crevice in your closets, bedsteads, pantry shelves, etc. If, in whitewashing a ceiling, plenty of alum is added to the whitewash, it will keep off insects.—*American Garden.*

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POWDERED ALUM rubbed lightly upon the flesh, and then brushed off, will remove all that unpleasant odor of perspiration so troublesome to many persons.

TO RESTORE FADED WRITING.—When writing has faded, if the paper is moistened with water and then brushed over with a solution of sulph.-hydric-ammonia, it will be restored. This article can be obtained of any druggist.

INDIGO.—Here is a good recipe for indigo: Two ounces oxalic acid, one ounce Prussian blue pulverized, and add one quart of soft water; mix well and bottle for use.

COAL ASHES.—The best purpose to which coal ashes can be applied, in town or country, is in making garden-walks. If well laid down, no weeds or grass will grow, and by use they become as solid and more durable than bricks.

CHAMOMILE.—A decoction of the leaves of common chamomile will destroy every species of insect, and nothing contributes so much to the health of a garden as a number of chamomile plants dispersed through it. No green-house or hot-house should ever be without it, in a green or dried state; either the stalks or flowers will answer. It is a singular fact that if a plant is drooping and apparently dying, in nine cases out of ten it will recover if you plant chamomile near it.

ECONOMY.—A prudent and economical housewife will make a soup of bits of cold meat and the broken bones of a fowl, flavored with an onion, a carrot, and a bit of parsley, that will prove more savory than a soup of thrice the cost made by a careless hand. From the toughest parts of a fat and well-flavored piece of beef or mutton, she will compound stews and potted dishes that will make the eater forget there are choicer bits to be had on any terms.

CEMENT FOR GLASS.—Cement for glass to be used without heating the glass: Boil isinglass in water to a creamy consistency, and add a little alcohol. Cement to be warmed before using.

TO MAKE MATS FOR THE TABLE.—Take small sticks of black walnut and pine; plane them down to one sixteenth of an inch in thickness and one-half inch in width. Place them alternately and glue to a piece of heavy cloth. They can be cut round, square, diamond-shaped or any other pretty way, and, when varnished, make quite a pretty ornamental mat.

TO MAKE TOUGH BEEF TENDER.—To those who have worn down their teeth masticating poor, old, tough cow-beef, we will say that carbonate of soda will be found a remedy for the evil. Cut your steaks the day before using into slices about two inches thick; rub them over with a small quantity of soda, wash off next morning, cut into suitable thicknesses and cook to notion. The same process will answer for fowls, legs of mutton, etc. Try it, all who love delicious, tender dishes of meat.

LIME WATER AND ITS USES.—Place a piece of unslacked lime (size is immaterial, as the water will only take up a certain quantity) in a perfectly clean bottle and fill with cold water; keep corked in a cellar or in a cool, dark place. It is ready for use in a few minutes, and the clear lime-water may be used whenever it is needed. When the water is poured off, add more; this may be done three or four times, after which some new lime must be used, as at first. A teaspoonful in a cup of milk is a remedy for children's summer complaint; also for acidity of the stomach. When added to milk it has no unpleasant taste, and when put into milk that would otherwise curdle when heated, it prevents curdling, so that it can be used for puddings and pies. A small quantity of it will prevent the "turning" of cream and milk. It also sweetens and purifies bottles which have contained milk. Some add a cupful to a sponge of bread to prevent it from souring.

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HOUSEHOLD CONVENIENCES.—"A place for everything, and everything in its place," is rather a hackneyed saying; but, after all, it perfectly describes the domain of a good housekeeper. As much attention should be given to the kitchen as to any other part of the house; a busy housewife spends a large amount of time in that room, and she should strive to render it a pleasure, and not a dread, to enter it. A great convenience in a kitchen is a roomy wall-pocket. It may be made very nicely of common brown card-board, bound with scarlet braid, having three pockets—a large one at the bottom and two smaller ones above. In the larger one may be put dusters, towels, etc.; in the others string, rag for cuts, and other small articles. Another convenience is a bag for dirty towels and dusters, which may hang in a closet in the kitchen. It saves much time and labor on a washing day. Always have a match-safe and scraper in the kitchen. It saves much disfigurement of the walls. Get your tinman to make you tin-boxes, with tight-fitting-lids, to hold yeast-cakes, tea, coffee, and spices. They preserve the flavor. A large apron, made of oil-cloth and bound with braid, is useful when washing clothes or dishes. Squares of zinc or tin are useful in the kitchen for standing saucepans on. If you are without ice in the summer, keep drinking water in unglazed earthenware jars or pitchers. The evaporation and condensation on the outside of the jar will keep its contents cold.

TO PRESERVE MEAT.—Boil together one quart good vinegar, two ounces of salt, two ounces of sugar; when cold wash the meat over with this mixture.

OATMEAL IN THE HOUSEHOLD.—In Great Britain children of all ranks are raised on an oatmeal diet alone, because it causes them to grow strong and healthful, and no better food can possibly be found for them. It is also quite as desirable for the student as the laborer, and for the delicate lady as for the hard-working sister; indeed, all classes would be greatly benefited by its use, and dyspepsia, with all its manifold annoyances, can be kept at a safe distance. Oatmeal is most substantial food; it is equal to beef or mutton, giving as much or more mental vigor, while its great desideratum consists of one's not becoming weary of it, for it is as welcome for breakfast or tea as is wheat or Graham bread. It can be eaten with syrup and butter, as hasty pudding, as with cream and sugar, like rice. It is especially good for young mothers upon whose nervous forces too great a demand has been made, when they lose the equilibrium of the system and become depressed and dispirited. Oatmeal requires to be cooked slowly, and the water should be boiling hot when it is stirred in.

TO PRESERVE DEAD GAME.—Take out the intestines, fill the inside with unground wheat, and place the fowl in a heap or cask of the same grain in such a manner as to insure its being covered. In this way fowls may be kept perfectly sweet for months. The feathers should be removed. Or, fill the cavity with charcoal and a little salt; rub the exterior with salt, pin up in a linen towel and hang in a dark, airy place. Wipe it dry before filling it. Any kind of meat will keep longer in hot weather, if it is put in an earthen jar, sprinkled with charcoal, and covered with netting to admit air and keep out flies.

AN ordinary flour or apple barrel will smoke four or five moderate-sized hams or shoulders. Both heads are removed and a movable cover provided for the top. This may be of boards, or an old oil-cloth or tight blanket will answer. A short trench is dug in which is laid a length of old stovepipe. A larger excavation is then made, in which a pan of burning cobs or chips can be placed. This is covered by a

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tightly fitting plank. One end of the stovepipe communicates with this excavation; over the other end the barrel is placed, the earth banked up around the bottom of the barrel, and over the stovepipe to keep all tight. The meat may be suspended from a stick laid across the top of the barrel, and then all covered tight with an oil-cloth or blanket. On placing a pan of smoking cobs or chips in the place provided, the smoke passes through the stovepipe into the barrel, filling it with a *dense, cool* smoke. Should the support of the hams, etc., break, the latter cannot be hurt by coming in contact with the fire or ashes, as sometimes happens in the regular smoke-house.

FOR HOUSE PLANTS.

THE CALLA LILY blooms at three years. Take an ordinary earthen jar, without a hole in the bottom, put the lily in and fill the jar three-quarters full of rich earth; fill with warm water in which you have put a few drops of ammonia; keep it in a warm room; give as much light and sun as possible and plenty of water.

SLUGS ON BEGONIAS.—Slugs are occasionally seen eating large holes or notches in the leaves of all succulents and begonias. They usually feed during the night. Cut potatoes, turnips or some other fleshy vegetable in halves, and place conveniently near the plants. The slugs will gather upon the vegetable, and are easily destroyed.

PLANT LICE.—Take three and a half ounces of quassia chips, add five drachms stavesacre seeds, in powder; place in seven pints of water, and boil down to five pints. When cold the strained liquid is ready for use, either by means of a watering pot or syringe.

WHITE WORMS.—The white worms which infest occasionally all soils where plants are kept in pots may be removed as follows: Sprinkle lime water over the soil, or sprinkle a little slacked lime on the earth and in the saucer of the pot. Lime water may be easily made by slacking a large piece of lime in a pail of cold water, letting this settle, and then bottling the clear water for use. Give each pot a tablespoonful twice a week.

OLEANDER BUGS.—To destroy the little bugs on the oleander, take a piece of lime the size of a hen's egg, and dissolve it in about two quarts of water. Wash the stock and branches of the tree with this water.

WHEN plants become weakly cut off the heads and bury the pot in earth exposed only to morning sun. They will soon send out a new top.

HOUSE PLANTS should be repotted every year. Loosen the earth at the pot sides with a knife, turn upside down and shake out, cut away all matted fibres, shake off all the loose earth, take a new pot, set the plant in, settle fresh earth about it, soak well, heap on fresh soil, and keep in the shade for two or three days.

SOIL FOR POT PLANTS.—One-quarter common soil, one-quarter well-rotted manure, one-half chips or rich woods earth; mix and sift through a coarse wire-sieve. If the common soil is clayey, use one-eighth sand and one-eighth soil.

HOME AMUSEMENTS.

Do not begrudge the family innocent amusements. Life brings abundant sorrows and regrets; let the Home be as nearly like Paradise as possible—a blessed oasis in memory. For small children, toys,

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simple ones, or home-made, or those which they are helped to make for themselves, are the very best. Let boys have some kind of a work-shop, and give girls a work-basket, round-end scissors and a plenty of material for inventions or experiments. Let them have musical instruments, if possible, *if there is musical taste;* pencils, patterns, drawing-paper and paints, if they like art. Give them a boat, if you can, if they are by a pond or creek; let them go fishing and pic-nicing, when it is suitable. Croquet, ball and out-of-door games, with a pole and bar for gymnastics, add much to the likelihood of keeping active children peaceably at home. Puzzles, dissected maps, checkers, chess, dominoes, the game of authors, fox and geese and jackstraws all help, with useful and pleasant books, to pass evenings, holidays and rainy days cheerfully; while they do their part in developing self-sacrifice, courtesy, ingenuity and quickness of thought.

Let the children have an occasional "candy-pull," a time of nut-cracking, corn-popping and apple-roasting: life will move more smoothly for the whole family by the help of such occasions of mirth and social pleasure.

In winter, skates and sleds should not be denied: they are good for both boys and girls. Sleds can be of home manufacture if money is scarce, and children will find means by self-denial and industry to buy their own skates, if they are allowed reasonable time to use them. When a gun is permitted, a lad should not be allowed to keep it loaded in the house, nor to clean it where the family are gathered, nor to shoot indiscriminately at birds and harmless creatures; he should be taught carefulness, humanity and explicit obedience in the use of his gun. Encourage all children to pursue gardening. Lead them on pleasantly in it, as says H. Ward Beecher, thus:

"If a boy should set out to raise flowers it is desirable that he should have flowers that are easy to raise, and are profuse in their blossom. A boy that can bury a chipmunk after he is dead can plant a gladiolus, and after they are once planted there is nothing to be done but to keep the bed weeded; and as soon as they blossom they are so gorgeous that the boy is sure to be very proud of them. You can get them for a few cents apiece, and so can furnish, for a dollar or two, a bed of gladiolas that will blossom more than two months, and be pre-eminently gorgeous. Then give him a little instruction, and let him try something else: a row of poppies, perhaps—they sow themselves. Get the French poppy, which is single, but runs

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through the most exquisite range of color—all combinations that you can imagine. Also the perennial poppy, which soon become established roots, and, in their time, they are so gorgeous that every one who comes near them has to put on smoked glasses, as it were! They fill a child's eye. They are for him a magnificent success. Every one admires them; and this admiration excites his ambition. The boy, who goes through that one summer, and finds every one spontaneously praising what he has done, has generally got the horticultural fever; and when he has once caught it he never recovers!"

HINTS ON SEWING AND MENDING.

Every woman, rich or poor, should know how to use a needle neatly and swiftly. In these machine days many girls think they can sew, because they can run over seams made ready by other people, while they are themselves ignorant of how to make a button-hole, to cut, fit, baste or finish an article. Seamstresses frequently injure their popularity by an ignorance of all that cannot be done by a machine. The needle has always been woman's legitimate weapon and ally. By it she has brought forth out of her treasures things new and old; she has warded off poverty from herself and family; has created much out of little; has for a lifetime rendered herself respectably independent. True, there have been many pitiful repetitions of the "Song of the Shirt," but there is a brighter side to the needlewoman question. What an autocrat was the elderly maiden who went from house to house in our childhood, the tailoress or dressmaker of the whole neighborhood, highest authority on both news and fashions!

DARNING is an important part of sewing. Table-linen, napkins, towels, sheets, pillow-cases, handkerchiefs, laces, and small fractures in clothing should be neatly *darned:* this kind of mending looks well, and lasts long.

PATCHING is another important art. A patch should run the way of the cloth mended; it should be set evenly without a drawing. When it is on white muslin, have the patch of a thinner quality than the original material, or it may tear out. Each week all clothing from the wash should be carefully examined and repaired; a rent should be mended at once, before the edges stretch or ravel. Every spring the house-wife should examine her whole stock of household linen, napery and bedding. Bed-quilts, which have rents, or are

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frayed at the edges, should be mended and re-bound; blankets, where broken, should be darned, and the edges bound or hemmed. Sheets with small breaks can be darned; a patch sometimes avails for a long time; a double sheet can be made to *double* its existence by overhanding the selvedge edges together, tearing down the centre of the sheet, and hemming it to become the outer edge.

A Worn-out Double Sheet will often cut over to advantage for a single bed or crib, or its good portions will make a pillow-case for servants' beds, and the worst portions make good hemmed cloths for use in covering articles in pantry and store-closet, or, doubled and run together, make good dusters. A small sheet descends also honorably to these uses.

Worn-out Table-Cloths, which have prolonged their existence by virtue of neat darns, can become common napkins, or make—the edges being fringed—very soft towels for infants and invalids, and fringed or hemmed are valuable for covering meats, cakes and pies in the store-closet.

Old Towels, when darning them has ceased to be a virtue, can be doubled and run together for dusters, or the best parts can be cut out and made up double for wash-cloths for the toilette.

Old Woollen and Flannel Clothes have not only their ordinary use as sewed into carpet-rags, but they can be cut in strips and crocheted or braided into mats, or can be made into dusting, floor and cleaning-cloths.

Worn-out Stockings can be neatly made over by cutting off the heels and soles, taking as much length from the toe as you cut off at the heel, and making new soles. One pair can be taken for making soles to three or four other pair.

Flannels, worn out for winter use, can sometimes be reconstructed for summer or night use by cutting out the necks, removing the sleeves, binding them with bias muslin, and darning the thin places.

Dresses, which look very shabby and worn out, can be rejuvenated by ripping, brushing, sponging, pressing, adding new facing and braid, putting on fresh buttons and some other trimming, and re-working the button-holes.

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SHIRTS, given new neck and wristbands and possibly bosoms, will hold out an extra year.

The buttons and strings should never be allowed to remain off SHOES, as the shoes are thus ruined by twisting and treading down. The clothes, as dresses, coats and skirts, of elder persons can be usefully made over for younger ones. Old white or lawn dresses will make up neatly into aprons, or serve to trim up toilette tables, or make ruffled bed-room lambrequins. Indeed, people would, as a general thing, be much better dressed and have their homes more tastefully decorated, if they would use up material from half-worn things which are now thrown away.

GLOVES should be mended with silk of their own color as soon as the least break appears.

Every girl and woman should know how to make shirts, underclothes, children's clothes, their own dresses and coats, and also how to retrim a hat for at least common wear. Many ladies have far better taste in bonnet-making than is possessed by the generality of milliners, and are likely to make a hat that will become their own faces, and have less of sameness than the productions of the milliner's shop, besides saving in the construction fully half the price of the article. A lady, who knows how to cut, fit and trim her dress, can call in an ordinary seamstress, and, by her help on the machine, make in a week several dresses for which her mantua-maker would have charged her from five to fifteen dollars each.

If ladies were content with a becoming, tasteful simplicity in children's clothing, not only, by themselves making the garments by this rule, would they save a large yearly sum from their expenses, but they would save also in material, while the children would be more comfortably and reasonably clothed in garments suitable to their active and playful habits. In making children's clothes always secure them with *buttons*, not with pins, and have the clothes supported by the shoulders, not by the hips: this rule should be regarded especially in girls' and women's clothes, where a pressure or weight at the waist is most dangerous.

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DRESS REFORM.

The subject of "Dress Reform" is hastily supposed by many to mean advocacy of the largely unpopular "Bloomer Costume." It is, however, nothing of the kind; it is merely the advocacy of four cardinal principles in dress, and plain instruction how to carry these simple principles into facts of clothing. We might call these four principles the fundamental axioms of dress. They are—

1. The clothing should be so arranged as to give all the body as nearly as possible an equal temperature.

2. Clothing should be so constructed as not to impede a proper exercise of all the muscles.

3. Clothing should be made as light as possible, that one need not go *weighted* into the ordinary avocations of life.

4. Clothing should be supported, not merely by one set of muscles, and these a set that, in the ordering of nature, have constant and arduous duties to perform, but it should be so adjusted as to be upheld by the strong bony framework.

One has only to look at a skeleton attentively to see that the shoulders, reinforced as they are by backbone and breastbone, by ribs and shoulder-blades, were meant to carry strongly and comfortably the burden of human dress. Now "Dress Reform" merely elucidates these four points, and explains how one's garments can be warm, evenly distributed, light, strong, and safe.

The old fashion of dress for women and children has been—passing by the gauze or flannel undervest, which it is to be hoped all wear—to put on first a long, full, cumbersome garment of cotton, gathered or tucked into a yoke. This leaves the arms and shoulders bare, and is in full folds about the waist, thus unevenly heating the surface, and creating the greatest warmth about the waist, stomach, and lower portion of the back. The excess of heat in these parts impairs digestion, weakens the spine, and encourages nervous disorders. Above this cotton garment, drawing it, as has been seen, closely about the waist and hips, the majority of deluded womankind wear a *corset*—two or three thicknesses more of heavy cotton cloth—which not only is injurious, as creating too much heat where there is too much already, but which impedes, by its tight fit, the motion of the muscles of the diaphragm, restricts the proper filling of the lungs, incommodes the action of the heart, and presses downward upon the bowels. This corset is by many supposed to support the skirts; but, as it is itself supported entirely by its close clasp of the merely muscular portions of the body, and is in no wise dependent from the shoulders. it is no true support. The skirts usually worn are too numerous and heavy, and their weight is thrown upon the hips. Dress reform proposes to do away with these errors in dressing. The propositions of dress reform are—1. Let the flannel shirt be high-necked and long-sleeved. 2. Do away with the folds, and masses of cotton. and the corset, and in place of the two have a cotton cloth basque, neatly fitted like an easy dress waist, with high neck and long or short sleeves, as may be preferred. Let this strong basque have two rows of buttons, upon which to button all the clothing of the lower portion of the body. 3. Let the hose come up over the knee, and be upheld by an elastic strap, buttoned to the top of the hose and to a side button on the basque. 4. Let the dress skirt, when not sewn to the dress waist, have four buttons. and be held up by the shoulders by means of a pair of "boy's suspenders." 5. Let the underskirts be of all wool flannel, as that material gives most warmth for least weight; and the upper skirt of cotton, silk, wool,

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or any fabric most desirable. 6. Let none of these garments press closely on any part of the person, impeding free muscular action. 7. Let the shoes fit the foot, have fairly thick soles, and a low heel set in proper place. 8. Many of those wearing this reasonable style of dress, instead of multiplying *skirts* in cold weather, as skirts blowing in the wind are cumbersome to walk in, use the same skirts as in summer, but add to the clothing an extra pair of drawers, made of flannel, lined, and buttoned to the cotton basque. Others put over the cotton undersuit, made as above, a similarly cut suit of red opera flannel or cashmere. This style of dress is much more comfortable and healthful than the long prevailing older fashion; it is cheaper, more easily made, is more simple to laundry, and far more likely than the "corset-fashion" to secure an erect, supple, vigorous, graceful, well-carried figure. A generation of women dressed in this manner would send hysteria, weak spines, and most nervous troubles to the "lost arts."

A BRIDAL TROUSSEAU.

Among the papers laid between the leaves of Aunt Sophronia's Scrap-Book was a copy of a letter sent to Mary Smalley, a few months before her marriage. Mary seems to have asked Aunt Sophronia to suggest to her the items of a suitable trousseau. The paper is thus prefaced:

"Every bridal outfit should be limited and arranged to accord with the bride's means, the station which she expects to occupy in life, and the place where she is to live. You write me that you cannot afford a large outlay, that you are to marry a young farmer, and live in the country. Let me hint first a few plain rules. Do not get so much clothing that it will lie in your bureau for years, turning yellow and getting out of fashion. Do not trim so delicately that the trimming will soon wear out, nor so elaborately that it will be troublesome to get your clothing properly laundried. For dresses, if you choose shades. and patterns, and materials, that are not striking or "novelties," your clothing will have really much more "style," and, also, wiil not nearly so soon become unusably out of fashion. For trimming white goods tucks are always in correct taste, and do up nicely. You can now buy tucked muslin of any kind for trimming. Lace is a frail trimming, and needs very nice ironing; puffs are very hard to iron; ruffles are neat, durable, and not difficult. Embroidery is pretty and in good taste, but wears out with painful promptitude. *Eight* is a good number for all undergarments, if you seek a golden mean of neither too much nor too little. If you like unbleached wear, three sets round might be of that muslin. For style of making you might have two suits quite simply made, one quite richly, and five between these extremes. Have eight pair of assorted hose; one dozen handkerchiefs, four very nice, four common, and four medium. As you are going to housekeeping, have one dozen of aprons of all styles, sewing aprons with wide pockets, baking aprons, large sweeping aprons, fancy aprons, white morning aprons: you can soon arrange your dozen. Have one pair of fine shoes, one pair of slippers, and two pair of boots for house and walking. Do not forget gossamer cloak, overshoes, and umbrella. Of gloves at least six pair, light kid, dark kid, silk, and the other three as you prefer. Have a best bonnet, a travelling hat, a second best, and something fit for running out in the field or garden, or to see a neighbor. Remember that a toilette has no more valuable accessories than collars, cuffs, neck-ribbons, neckwear generally. Half the effect of a toilette is in dressing the neck. Have a warm, loose, double gown, of flannel or other woollen goods,

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fit to slip on quickly, if illness or any emergency in your household calls you up at night; also have a pretty dressing gown, if you should be half ill or sitting up convalescent. Have two dressing sacks, one of chintz, trimmed with a plain edge, one of flannel or canton flannel. Have two white and two gray or scarlet flannel petticoats, four or five long white skirts; a dark long skirt for winter wear, a stripped ditto for warmer weather, and a sateen or nankeen skirt for wearing while at housework. Of dresses have one good black silk, one nice merino or cashmere, one nicely made lawn or linen. Have two dark ginghams or calicoes for working dresses, and something in medium color, of alpaca or other worsted goods, for spring and fall. If you are married in a dark wine, brown, or blue silk, you will then be pretty well furnished with dresses, and can add, as you are able, some others for afternoons or an evening dress, to suit your tastes and the time of year. A good shawl is a valuable part of a wardrobe; and you will have other outside wraps, as your purse, and the fashion, and season dictate. If I have made my list, while not too large for convenience, too large for your means, reduce the sets of underclothing and hose to six, leave out two pair of gloves, four handkerchiefs, one or two of the skirts, one hat, and one pair of boots, and have only one silk dress. If you must study economy in your dresses, do not get plaid, checked, striped, or brocaded goods—they soon are out of style."

This paper seems to have been sent to Hester, in answer to a similar request, and has these remarks:

"As your means are not limited, and as the laundry work will not be a particular item in your calculations, you should have your undersuits all of fine white, trimmed with edgings, tucks, and ruffles, and make the number a dozen of each kind. Of gloves, one dozen; of hose, two dozen; of handkerchiefs, two dozen; of assorted boots and shoes, six pair. You will want a handsome evening hat, a wrap suitable for concerts and lectures. You are to live in the city; you need two handsome walking suits, at least two evening dresses; you can exercise your taste more freely in getting dress goods that are the prevailing fashion, for as you go out more and have more company than if you were in the country, you will use up your gowns before they are *outré*. You need a rich and simple travelling costume; one or two waists of velvet or satin to vary your toilettes. You need several lace articles for neck and shoulders, according to the fashion, and two or three fans. It is not your disposition to be extravagant, and culture has taught you to be tasteful, so you may safely guide yourself without suggestion in the matter of the make, number, and material of your dresses."

AN INFANT'S WARDROBE.

Another paper laid in Aunt Sophronia's Scrap-Book is a copy of a list sent either to Helen or Miriam, who asked advice as to the garments to be made ready for a babe. The paper begins:

In preparing this clothing have regard to certain important principles: 1. Do not get more clothing than you need. You wear yourself out in providing superfluities, and that at a period when you need rest. 2. Do not have the clothes heavy and cumbersome, either from too great length, unduly thick material, or excess in trimming: free play of the muscles will do your child more good than yards of muslin, lace, and embroidery on its skirts. 3. Have as few pins about these clothes as possible. 4. Make no arrangements for leaving your babe's neck and arms bare; it is often a fatal error.

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The following is a list of needed articles. The number can be reduced if extreme economy must be used. It can also be increased conveniently, for the list is not on a large scale. Some of the last articles can be omitted entirely, or made only when the child is a few weeks old.

LIST.

Four bands of fine flannel, eight inches wide, twenty-four long, the edges turned down and tent-stitched.

Six shirts of fine linen, the neck and sleeves may be finished in a narrow lace, have nothing to irritate the skin.

Three flannel shirts, twenty-seven or thirty inches long, for night wear, open in front, hemmed in tent-stitch or coral-stitch of silk or wool.

Six night dresses, high neck and long sleeves, thirty-two inches from neck to hem; some make these of thin flannel, others of fine shirting muslin.

Four wrappers of spotted chintz, or of white canton flannel.

Four sacks cf fine opera flannel, or of crochet work in delicate colors, for day wear.

Two night blankets, one yard square, of flannel, hemmed in tent or coral-stitch.

Two blankets for day use, of fine flannel, embroidered, or otherwise trimmed to taste.

Four dozen of diapers; diaper linen twenty-seven inches wide is best, but many use canton flannel.

Six bibs, double, to tie or button about the neck.

Three or four fine flannel skirts twenty-seven inches long, for day wear.

Four white muslin skirts, thirty inches long.

[One flannel and one white skirt can be made each one yard long if preferred, but one yard long is too cumbersome to be safe for ordinary wear.]

Six white slips, trimmed to taste, one yard from neck to hem.

Mothers who need to economize washing, make these slips very prettily of small-figured light print. The white petticoats for day wear are not indispensable, and the ordinary day blanket can be in blue or pink. One handsome slip can be added, longer than the others. Socks can be used or omitted according to taste. They are safe to use, if they can be *kept on* without impeding circulation at the ankles.

One hood or cap for out-of-door wear.

One cloak.

One Baby Dressing-Basket.—This is a basket of wicker or pasteboard, lined and trimmed to suit the taste; it has a powder-box—which should never have anything but pure pulverized corn starch in it—a brush and comb, six soft towels, two soft wash cloths, or a very soft surgical sponge; a pincushion, a china box for fine soap—tar soap, or brown Windsor, or old Castile will be the best; a small bottle of vasaline or of glycerine, prepared by a druggist, with rose-water and carbolic acid, for use in chapped or abraded places. This basket, if kept in order, is very convenient for making the baby's toilette, and saves a daily gathering up and carrying about of dressing articles.

It is a real unkindness to a baby to make it so fine that it cannot kick, and roll, and be jolly in its own style, and grow thereby. To put on the soft little stranger corals, shoulder-clasps, knots of colored ribbon—with which it poisons itself by sucking—may be good taste, but not especially good judgment.

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A FEW SIMPLE REMEDIES.

TOOTHACHE may be speedily and delightfully ended by the application of a small bit of cotton, saturated in a strong solution of ammonia, to the defective tooth.

FOR FACEACHE, OR SWOLLEN FACE, administer six drops of ammonia in a tablespoonful of water; make a poultice of hops and flour, or meal, or simply of boiled hops, and put it on the face, covering with flannel. A quiet, dark room and a sleep will complete a cure.

FOR ACUTE NEURALGIA OF THE EYE OR HEAD, bathe the part in warm water strongly impregnated with laudanum; keep cloths wrung out from this mixture lying covered with flannel on the painful place, and administer ammonia as above every half hour, or one tablespoon of ammoniated valerian every four hours.

FOR HYSTERICS, OR HYSTERIC CONVULSIONS, rub the spine with a coarse towel, put hot water to the feet, bind poultices of mustard and flour on the wrists and ankles, and administer the ammoniated valerian as above. Remove all corsets or compressing clothing. In these cases perfectly calm common-sense is needed to control the patient; the nurse should be firm and not too sympathetic.

FOR CROUP, administer a teaspoonful of strong alum water; repeat the dose every fifteen minutes until free vomiting occurs. Put the legs in hot water and then wrap up in flannel; place on the chest a poultice of corn meal sprinkled with mustard. Beware of cold draughts. As the attack departs, administer a dose of magnesia, rhubarb or of castor oil. Where children are liable to croup, always keep the alum water solution ready on the wash-stand.

FOR SEVERE VOMITING, after the stomach seems to have been relieved of any irritating substance, put at the feet a bottle of hot water, and apply to the stomach cloths wrung out of hot vinegar and mustard; keep the patient in bed, with the head comfortably elevated, apply a cloth wet in cold water to the forehead, and keep a handkerchief wet in bay rum, cologne or champhor, near the face. Have the air pure; the room partially darkened.

ERUPTIONS on the face in spring, or occasioned by heated blood, may be cured by washing the face each night with a mild solution of epsom salts, letting it dry on. Take one ounce cream tartar, one ounce epsom salts, mix in one pint cold water, keep in a cold place, and take a dessertspoonful three times daily: this cleanses the blood gradually, and purifies the complexion.

FOR DIPHTHERIA.—Strip from a well-smoked uncooked ham a portion of the skin, tearing it off so that the fat grains will adhere. Cut this to fit the throat, hollowing it for the front, and allowing a portion to rise high up to each ear. Bind this on the throat—the greasy side next the flesh—and renew it every four hours. Administer twenty drops of *muriated tincture of iron* three times daily, reducing the dose if the child is less than seven years old. Gargle the throat with flowers of sulphur water, or blow flowers of sulphur gently into the throat through a quill, or burn a minute portion of sulphur on a shovel and let the patient inhale the fumes. Repeat the sulphur treatment three times daily. Keep the patient in bed; the feet warm; the head cool; the room *well aired*—foul air is death in diphtheria. Let the food be ice cream, or dessertspoonfuls of cream, or pure calves' foot jelly, or raw egg and loaf sugar well beaten and administered half an egg at a time four times daily. This treatment we believe to be *infallible* in diphtheria: it has cured the most obstinate cases. And if the house where the disease appears is at once well whitewashed, fumigated *well* with sulphur three days in succession, and the drains, drain pipes

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and sewage are at once attended to, we believe there is *no* probability of the disease proving fatal or spreading: *diphtheria is a disease of drain origin.* The sulphur in this treatment kills the poison spores rooted in the throat; the iron strengthens the blood to resist them, and to give them no root-hold.

SORE THROAT.—For common sore throat a gargle of salt and vinegar and a little pepper is efficacious. Also to boil a little cayenne pepper in vinegar and inhale the fumes. Sulphur fumes or gargle as above also. Burn sulphur in tiny particles.

TO CURE HOARSENESS.—It may be useful to know that hoarseness is relieved by using the white of an egg, thoroughly beaten, mixed with lemon juice and sugar. A teaspoonful taken occasionally is the dose.

REMEDY FOR EARACHE.—There is scarcely an ache to which children are subject so hard to bear and so difficult to cure as the earache. But there is a remedy never known to fail. Take a bit of cotton batting, put upon it a pinch of black pepper, gather it up and tie it, dip in sweet oil and insert into the ear. Put a flannel bandage over the head to keep it warm. It will give immediate relief.

When a child has earache, keep it warm and quiet, soothe it by songs, by stories, and by rocking it gently; give *no opiates*, but administer a few drops of ammonia in water. Let it drink a cupful of corn meal gruel; give it a gentle cathartic, as rhubarb or magnesia, and if the attack is violent, bind a hop-poultice over the ear. Syringing the ear with warm *Castile soap* suds and sweet oil is good, but be careful what you put in so delicate an organ as the ear. Do not ignore or undervalue an attack of earache; it is a terrible pain, very exhausting to the nerves, and might produce serious results. A child subject to it should have its ears protected from cold and draughts, and *its feet kept dry and warm.*

FROST BITES.—The following is a simple remedy for frost bites. Extract the frost by the application of ice water till the frozen part is pliable, but let no artificial heat touch it; then apply a salve made of equal parts of hog's lard and gunpowder, rubbed together until it forms a paste, and in less than four hours the frozen parts will be well.

A REMEDY FOR CHILBLAINS.—Take a piece of lime the size of your double fist, put it in warm water and soak your feet in it, as warm as you can bear, for half an hour.

TO INSURE SLEEP.—If troubled with wakefulness, follow these rules: Eat nothing hearty after sunset; calm your mind before retiring; go to bed at a regular hour; when you awake, rise and dress at once, no matter how early in the morning; never sleep in the day. These five rules observed will insure sleep.

DOG BITE.—An aged forester has published the following in a Leipzig journal: "I do not wish to carry to my grave my much-proved cure for the bites of mad dogs, but will publish the same as the last service which I can offer to the world. Wash the wound perfectly clean with wine-vinegar and tepid water; then dry it.

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Afterward pour into the wound a few drops of muriatic acid, for mineral acids destroy the poison of the dog's saliva."

THE best remedy for bleeding at the nose, as given by Dr. Gleason, is the vigorous motion of the jaws, as if in the act of mastication. In the case of a child a small wad of paper should be put in the mouth, and the child instructed to chew it hard. It is the motion of the jaws that stops the flow of blood. This remedy is simple, but it has never been known to fail.

ANOTHER certain method of stopping nose-bleeding is to fold or roll up a piece of paper about one and a half inches long, and press it closely between the upper lip and gum, as high up as it will go; this at once checks the bleeding: loss of blood from the nose is sometimes nature's safe remedy, and should not be checked too quickly.

No accidents are more common than strains, and no remedy is better than *hot water*. Bathe the strained part for ten or fifteen minutes, then rub with vinegar, camphor water, or some liniment (warmed), and rest the injured portion as long as may be needful.

FOR COLDS on the breast, rheumatic pains, or incipient pneumonia, or congestion of the lungs, no remedy is more effectual than a plaster made of two tablespoonfuls of lard, and one of mustard, rubbed to a smooth paste, spread on flannel, and applied immediately to the skin. Do not have a cloth between the skin and the paste; the lard entirely prevents blistering or unpleasant irritation. Lay upon this plaster a large piece of cotton batting, and then a cloth, as the lard is so penetrating that it is apt to soil the clothing. This remedy applied on the temple has cured severe and dangerous cases of rheumatism of the eye.

Many diseases are induced in summer, and sudden deaths occur, from people drinking freely of cold water while they are over-heated or exhausted from work. Dr. Parker gives the following advice as to—

THE BEST DRINK FOR LABORERS.—"When you have any heavy work to do, do not take either beer, cider or spirits. By far the best drink is thin oatmeal and water with a little sugar. The proportions are a quarter of a pound of oatmeal to two or three quarts of water, according to the heat of the day, and your work, and thirst. It should be well boiled, and then an ounce and a half of brown sugar added. If you find it thicker than you like, add three quarts of water. Before you drink it shake up the oatmeal well through the liquid. In summer drink this cold; in winter hot. You will find it not only quenches thirst, but will give you more strength and endurance than any other drink. If you cannot boil it, you can take a little oatmeal mixed with cold water and sugar, but this is not so good. Always boil it if you can. If at any time you have to make a long day, as in harvest, and cannot stop for meals, increase the oatmeal to half a pound, or even three-quarters, and the water to three quarts, if you are likely to be very thirsty. If you cannot get oatmeal, wheat flour will do, but not quite so well."

We would add that while it is an *enormous cruelty* and dangerous to life to force a horse or other beast to labor in the heat without drink, which it craves *as much as a man*, it will suffer *as much as a man* from a sudden cold drink. Give the working beast a pailful of water in which a tablespoonful of salt and a quart of bran are stirred.

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For a Wound.—The most severe wounds can be treated as follows: ragged wounds, or those produced by a nail, or blunt rusty iron, thus treated will be sure to heal, while otherwise they would be almost certain to produce lockjaw; soak the wound in *moderately* strong lye—about half good wood-ash lye, and half *soft water*—until all stiffness departs and the swelling is reduced; then cover it with the *lees of laudanum* (laudanum sediment procurable from a druggist), and above that place a poultice made of corn meal. It is well to anoint the edges of the wound with castor oil.

For a Boil, or Gathering, an excellent poultice is made by pounding the leaves of the common garden-pulse—which children pinch and blow to make bags of—with clean lard; add a few drops of laudanum.

For a Burn, a good poultice is made by pounding smooth the well-washed roots of the swamp cat-tail; it gives almost instant relief.

Poultices are usually better for the addition of a little sweet or castor oil, and a few drops of laudanum.

Glycerine is valuable for rough or chapped hands; it is excellent in earache, and if this arises from the hardening of wax in the ear, glycerine will soften it and bring it away sooner than anything else. It is perfectly safe. It is good also for cuts and burns.

Chapped Hands should be well soaked each night in warm Castile soap suds, then shake out from the suds, rub in glycerine for six or ten minutes, put on a pair of old kid or leather gloves to sleep in. If the glycerine and gloves are not obtainable, soak well in Castile suds, dry with a soft towel, then rub in near a fire clean mutton tallow, and bind up the hands in linen cloths for the night. If hands given to chapping were always rubbed in corn meal after being put in water, from early in the cold season, they would remain smooth and healthful.

A Felon can be cured by putting on it in its early stage a small blister of Spanish flies, as big as a silver five-cent piece: this draws the felon to the surface; pierce it with a large needle, poultice in bread and milk for three hours and then dress with castor oil.

Before a felon begins to gather, a poultice of pounded poke root will often cure it completely.

For Cough.—Make a pint of strong sage tea; add one-half teaspoonful of alum, two tablespoonfuls honey, one tablespoonful gum arabic.

For Cough.—Make one pint strong flaxseed tea; squeeze in the juice of two lemons; add quarter pound lump sugar.

For Cough.—Almost a sure cure, especially for a dry cough of long standing, is, five cents worth of bi-carbonate of potash, and one-half cup loaf sugar in three-quarter pint of cold water; take a tablespoonful every hour or two.

For Fainting.—Lay the patient down; give plenty of air, allow no crowding; loosen the clothing; rub the hands, sprinkle the head and face, and apply hartshorn to the nostrils; when consciousness begins to return raise the head a little, or half-sitting, and fan. Do not seem excited, nor speak loudly.

For a Fit.—Extend the patient with the head elevated; give plenty of air; apply ice or cold water to the head, and heat to the feet; apply ammonia or *sal volatile*, rub the feet and hands.

For Hemorrhage.—Lay the patient down, apply cold cloths to the chest, and administer table salt at short intervals; send for a physician.

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FOR a sudden seizure of indigestion, with dangerous symptoms, administer a teaspoonful of table salt, put a mustard plaster on the stomach, hot brick to the feet, and give a gentle cathartic.

FOR A PERSON FROZEN.—Keep them away from the fire, rub violently with snow or ice-cold water; when recovering roll up in a blanket, put in bed, cover well, and give warm tea or hot beef-soup.

FOR A PERSON STRUCK BY LIGHTNING, dash water on them and strip and lay in a trench of newly opened earth; rub vigorously.

FOR SUFFOCATION BY DROWNING OR HANGING.—First get them out of the water or rope *promptly*, apply heat to the feet, rub the whole body vigorously. Press the chest regularly to imitate the breathing motion; using an oxygen gas pipe and a pair of bellows to fill the lungs is good; wrap in hot blankets; apply to the nose ammonia, give six drops of ammonia in a tablespoonful of water; as soon as life reappears give hot tea in spoonfuls, or hot milk or soup. Heat, friction, inhaling of strong stimulants, and artificial breathing, are what is needed.

ANTIDOTES FOR POISON.—Soda, salt, vinegar, chalk, raw eggs, mustard, sweet oil, soap, and milk, are powerful remedies for poisons, and are in every house. Send for a doctor, but do *not wait* for doctor or druggist: *go to work*. If the poison is an alkali, vinegar is a remedy. Freely drinking of new milk, continuing to drink even when the stomach returns the milk, will destroy even arsenic poisoning.

If *sulphuric* or *oxalic acid* has been taken, swallow a quantity of chalk; the whites of raw eggs stirred up and swallowed, taking six, eight or more successively as fast as possible, will destroy poisons, as *corrosive sublimate;* mustard, stirred in soft water and freely drunk, will cause vomiting and destroy poison. Any kind of oil, as olive, linseed or common lard oil, will also destroy poison.

Phosphorus, as when children suck matches, give a tablespoonful of magnesia and then freely gum arabic water; less magnesia if only a little phosphorus is taken.

Opium, as laudanum poisoning, needs a strong emetic; a tablespoonful of mustard in a glass of warm water, or a half teaspoonful of powdered alum in as little water or coffee as will carry it down, and repeat the dose.

Strychnine also demands very quick emetic, as above, or a heavy dose of ipecac. Opium poison needs also friction, fanning, shaking, cold water on the head, and all efforts to arouse the patient.

Nitrate of Silver needs warm salt water until a free vomit.

Ammonia taken raw by accident: give new milk, olive oil, ice in bits, bind ice on the throat.

Sugar of Lead needs lemon juice, vinegar, raw tomatoes, and finally a good dose of Epsom salts.

Prussic acid, or *fruit-stone poisoning*, demands a good emetic, and administer freely ammonia and water.

Antimony is corrected by *very strong* green tea, and alum water.

After all these remedies, empty the stomach by a clear, warm water emetic, and keep the patient in bed on a raw-egg diet for thirty hours.

A WORD ON SEWERS.

Sewers are our most dangerous conveniences. They breed diphtheria, fevers and eruptive diseases. Typhoid, and typhus, and yellow fever are the children of defective sewage. Sewers are, as

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yet, never absolutely well constructed; they are never in perfect order. If our own sewers are not dealing us out death, we may be sure that our neighbors' are bestowing ruin upon us; and even when we fancy all is right, before the sentinels of nose and palate give a warning of poison, our atmosphere is loaded with spores of disease. What shall we do with our sewers? Oh, trap the pipes? Well, the traps are in nine cases out of ten defective or out of order, and while the one set of pipes are trapped, the overflow pipe is *not* trapped, and who has given gas an injunction not to rise up through the overflow pipe? Lie awake some night and listen, and a whistle like the low hiss of a springing snake warns you that sewer-gas is ignoring the traps, or is arriving through the overflow pipe. The danger of sewers may be thus stated:- Many of our worst diseases arise from *blood poisoning.* Our blood is poisoned by our inhaling poisonous spores. These spores come from decaying animal or vegetable matter, and are in their complete state contained in the bath and clothing-wash-water, and the chamber refuse of persons suffering from these diseases. Our sewers are constantly filled with animal and vegetable decay, and with these refuse spores of disease. On the gas, or light air generated in sewers, these spores of poison rise to permeate our dwellings. Our sewers are not ventilated; therefore there is no escape for this poison-burdened air except into the houses by our own house-pipes. If the entire system of town sewers could be ventilated by means of tall chimneys connected with furnaces and factories, the dangers of our sewers would be greatly lessened; but these spores would still fall or light *somewhere,* therefore the ventilating chimneys should be provided mid-way with some apparatus which would chemically destroy the spores. Not only are sewers unventilated, but they are subject to back or tide water, rising up along them and crowding back the volume of gas and foul air, which retreats upon the houses. The device for preventing the re-arising of sewage gas through the pipes has been a trap; that is, a portion of the pipe which holds water from half an inch to several inches depth, through which it is supposed that gas will not rise. But from these traps the water *evaporates,* or it is *blown out* by the force from below, or the rush of

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water downward is so great that it *sucks out* the trap, or the trap may be "siphoned," as is betokened by a roaring sound in the disappearing water.

Great storms, heavy rainfall, high tides, all press immense volumes of foul, death-dealing gas back on our dwellings, and our sole defence is a poor weak little trap of perhaps an inch depth, and subject to a dozen disasters. At sea one says with solemnity, "There is but a plank between me and death;" but one sits and eats his dinner contentedly when there is but one inch of water between his whole household and death. *Traps* are also placed in the street *inlets*. These, when deep and strong, offer resistance in such fashion, that the gas will run up into the houses with their weak traps before getting into the open air of the streets. Another trouble is, that terra-cotta sewer-pipes are laid without being cemented together, and that builders, to save expense, put in very small, weak traps, and leave out the water-closet traps into the sewer in spite of the ordinance of prohibition. When you hear pipes and vents *bubbling*, know that death is abroad. Let it rouse you like a tocsin, for you have a worse than material enemy to fight.

1. Use for your basins and tubs frequently a strong solution of lye or caustic soda to cleanse pipes and traps.

2. Keep the window in the bath-closet open two inches at top and bottom, and the *door closed*. See that the door fits tightly and has the cracks covered with strips of felt.

3. Morning and night run clear water into the basins to fill the trap.

4. Put the plug in the basin and half fill it when leaving it.

5. Make a plaster of four-double wet paper, and stop over the overflow holes. Be careful to do this every night.

In villages and in the country people having an out-of-door water-closet should be sure to have—

1. A deep well-bricked vault.

2. A wooden pipe or chimney three by four inches in diameter, reaching from the vault through the roof of the closet, and high enough to carry gas away from the house.

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3. Take heed that this pipe is not near or level with your bed-room windows.

4. Have well-fitted covers to the closet seats; a window in each side made of slats, not glass; and a weight on the door so that it will keep shut.

Remember that a drain where wash-water and bath-water are thrown is *dangerous*, being full of decaying animal matter. Cleanse it with lye and ashes or potash, and have it incline well and empty far from the house.

Remember that the drain-pipe from your dish-water sink ***is very dangerous***, as holding decaying animal and vegetable matter. Let it carry off its water from the house and cleanse it daily; weekly using lye or strong potash water.

Here ended the collections from her journals and various papers, made at our earnest request, by our Town and Family Oracle. We have given them with little alteration as a thinking woman's views of that which is woman's widest kingdom and her highest sphere.

The Editor—JULIA MCNAIR WRIGHT.

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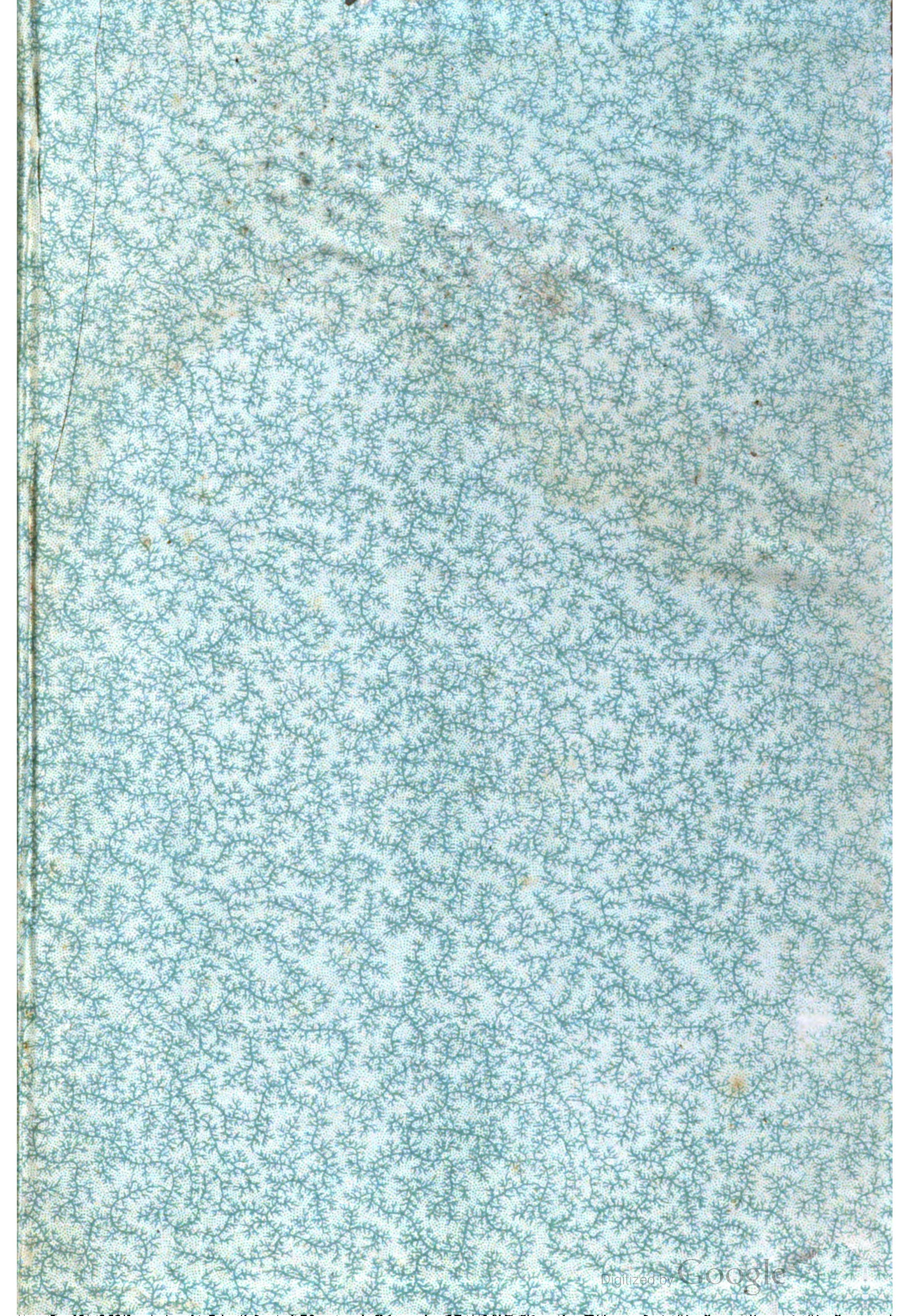

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