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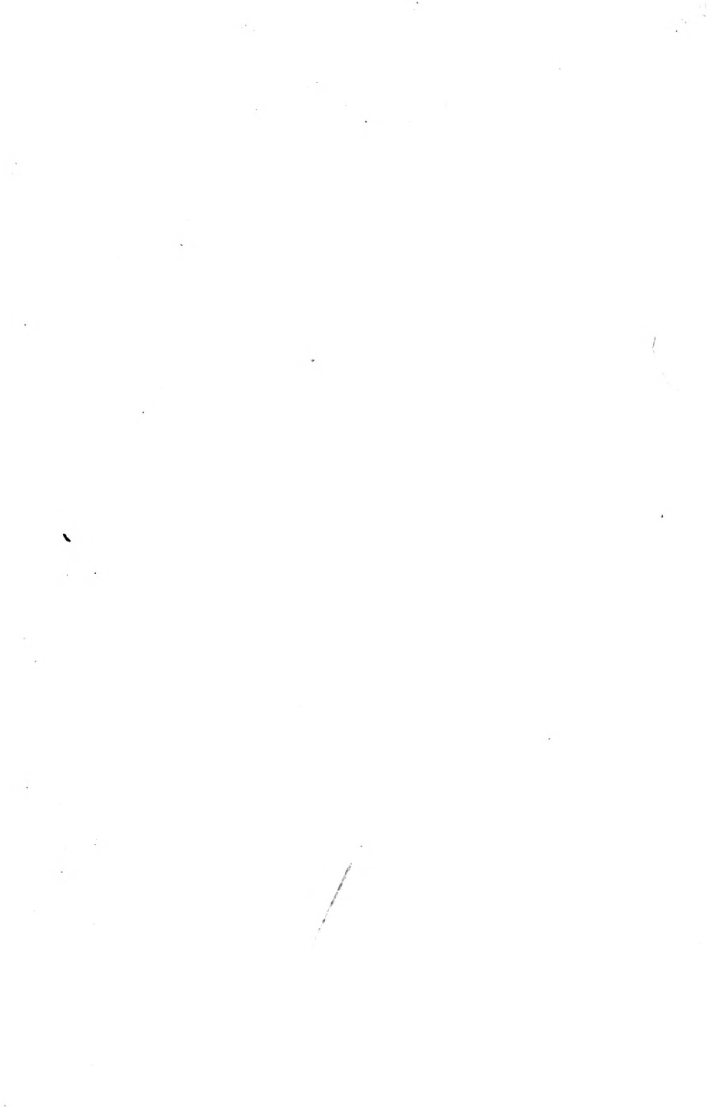
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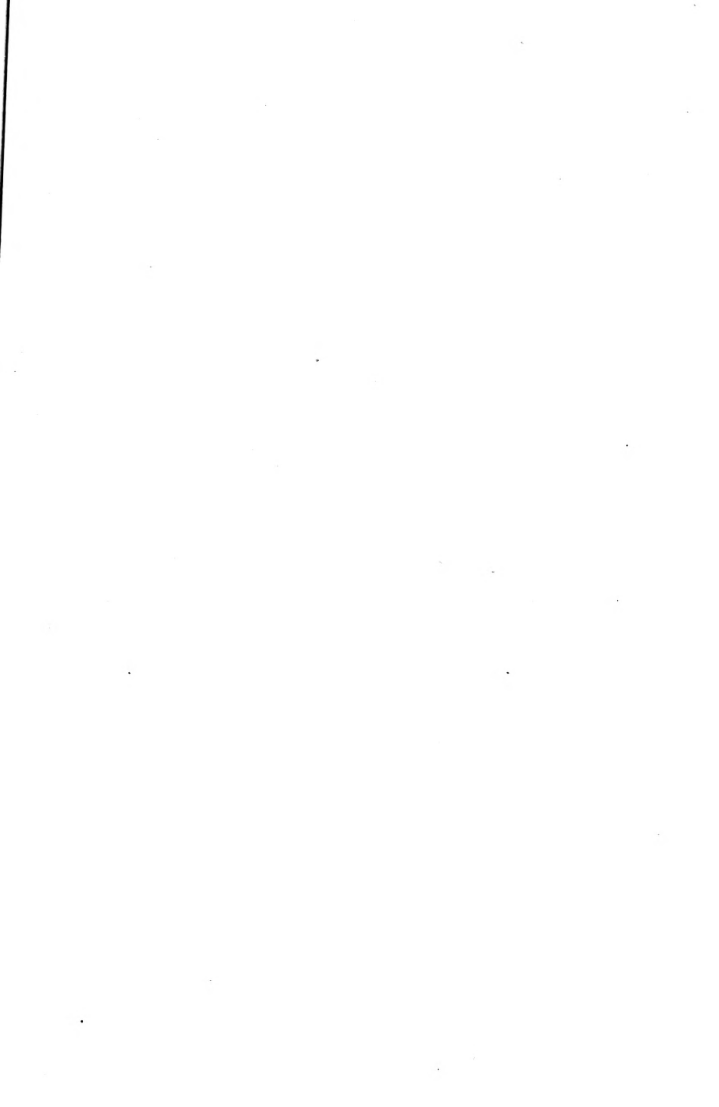
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# COMMON-SENSE HOUSEKEEPING.





COMMON-SENSE  
HOUSEKEEPING.

BY  
PHILLIS BROWNE.

CASSELL PETTER & GALPIN:  
*London, Paris & New York.*

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## PREFACE.



THIS little volume makes no pretension whatever to being either perfect or exhaustive. It is merely a collection of practical hints as to the management of ordinary households, and is intended for young married ladies who have only lately assumed the "care of a house." I believe there are large numbers of these who earnestly desire to do well the duty that lies nearest to them, and to be true helpmeets to their husbands, and who yet are a little uncertain as to the best way of setting about the work. I should be very happy if they in their young days could gain even a little help from my experience, the result of long years of endeavour.

The papers contained in this book appeared

originally in CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE. They are now published in a handy form, in the hope that they may find favour with a still larger circle of readers.

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# COMMON-SENSE HOUSEKEEPING.



## CHAPTER I.

### HOW WE FAILED TO MAKE BOTH ENDS MEET.

SHORTLY after our marriage I am ashamed to say we found ourselves in difficulties. We had begun life on our own account very comfortably. Jack had saved enough to furnish a home, and I had put aside from my salary as a governess enough money to provide us with many little elegancies and comforts which we must otherwise have been without. When our friends came to see us, as they looked at our cosy dining-room and charming little drawing-room—at the garden, bright with flowers, which was to be kept in its present state of perfection by our own unassisted efforts—at the neat little maid-servant who waited on us, and who, under my supervision, was to be our only help—I could see with pride that they admired our surroundings very much. Perhaps I fancied that one or two of my own

particular bosom friends were inclined to envy my happiness, and would themselves have been quite ready to take possession of such a nest with such a mate. Jack was handsome, there was no doubt about it ; and he was so bright, and so loving, and so good, how could I help being delighted with my new husband and my new home ?

And yet we had only £250 a year.

“How are we to arrange about the money, little woman ?” said my husband, as we were having a quiet talk together soon after we had settled down.

“How do you mean about the money ?” said I.

“Well, as you know, the house has been furnished out of our mutual savings. The expenses of the wedding and honeymoon trip have been paid out of the £50 note your Uncle John gave you as a wedding present. That £50 is now nearly spent, and I think we ought to arrange together about how we are to lay out our income for the future. I should like to make both ends meet.”

“Oh, of course, so should I,” I answered ; “but at the same time I should like to have things nice. We can do just as we like now, and everything depends upon the way in which we begin. If we make a good start, we shall keep it up ; if we begin having things commonly done, we shall grow worse and worse. I should like your friends to see that



you have improved your position by marrying, not lowered it."

"That is all very well," said Jack; "but we must be economical too."

"This is not a question of economy, it is a question of resolution. With management, things may be done properly with as little expense as it will cost to do them badly. I wish Mary Ann could cook a little better, though," I added in an undertone, as the remembrance of the dinners we had partaken of since our marriage, which had been cooked and served anything but properly, flashed across my mind. "That leg of mutton on Sunday was horrible."

"Yes," said Jack, with a sigh, "I have tasted dinners better cooked than that one was. I was sorry that we had asked Jenkins to dine with us, because he is such a particular fellow about his food. However, my dear, you must teach Mary Ann."

"That is just it," I said; "I am afraid I do not know myself, and so cannot teach her. You see, Jack," I continued in a deprecating tone, seeing that my husband looked rather blank, "I went out as a governess almost as soon as I left school, and I only left to be married."

"I thought all young ladies knew how to cook, as a matter of course," said Jack. "But to return to the money question. How is that to be arranged? I

want us to settle it, because the day after to-morrow is the day the quarterly salaries are paid at our place. Let us begin as we mean to go on."

"Well, dear, as far as I am concerned, I can only tell you that I will be very economical. I can but do my best."

"But would you not like to have a certain sum put aside for household expenditure every quarter?" said Jack; "and then you will know how far you can go."

"No," I answered decidedly, "that I could *not* bear. I have seen the working of that system again and again. The husband doles out a pittance to his wife, very likely quite inadequate to the necessities of the case, and begins to consider himself quite an aggrieved party if the wife goes at all beyond it. Then in a little time the wife gets to look upon her husband as a tyrant and a master, as one who is continually disappointed in her. This feeling leads her to hide her difficulties from him, and love and confidence between the two become unknown quantities. You would not like me to tremble before you every time I spent half-a-sovereign more than usual, would you, Jack?"

"Of course I should not," said Jack; "and I should not think there is much fear of that sort of feeling growing up between us."

"I would not say so," I answered. "I should soon

get terrified of you if you were to 'allowance' me. No! what I should propose would be this: we will both determine that we will be as economical as we possibly can be, knowing that it is right, and necessary, and wise that we should be so. This being the understanding, we will keep the money in a locked drawer, of which we will each have a key, and we will take out what we find is necessary."

"Very well," said Jack, after thinking a minute, "so it shall be. I have a very great dread of getting wrong in money matters, but I think I have even a greater dread of any cloud rising between you and me, and I would never willingly do anything to cause that."

At the appointed time Jack brought home his pile of sovereigns, £62 10s.; together we placed them in the drawer, and took possession of the respective keys. It seemed as if we could do so much with all that money.

"There are no bills to pay, are there?" said I, feeling very wise and prudent as I spoke; "if there are, let us pay them first—'Out of debt, out of danger.'"

"No, there are not," said Jack.

"I should rather like to have a few friends to dinner," said Jack, a day or two after; "what do you say, my dear? I feel so proud of my little wife and

my comfortable home that I want my friends to know what a lucky fellow I am."

"Very well, dear, I will make your friends welcome, you may be quite sure. Whom do you wish to ask?"

"Oh, Jones, and Thompson, and Smith, and Robinson, and Jenkins. I should like Jenkins to come again, because we were so unfortunate with that leg of mutton when he was here. I hope Mary Ann will distinguish herself in a different way."

"I shall not leave it to Mary Ann. I shall engage a professed cook, and then we shall have no fear but that the thing will be a success."

"Won't that be a great expense?" said Jack.

"No. Mrs. Dentor told me she knew of a woman, a very good cook, who would come for five shillings a day. It would be well worth while to pay five shillings in order to know that everything was right."

"If only five shillings is to be the extent of it," said Jack, a little doubtfully.

The woman came, and with her assistance the dinner passed off very successfully. Everything was good and excellently cooked, and even the fastidious Mr. Jenkins seemed to enjoy his dinner very much, after he had once got over the uneasiness that he evidently felt at the beginning of the evening lest every dish should be dressed in a similar style to the never-to-be-forgotten leg of mutton.

Both Jack and I felt that the dinner was a great triumph, and Jack told me in confidence how glad he was to find that his wife was domesticated. He confessed that he had had misgivings, but that this delightful dinner had removed them entirely, and had proved to him beyond a doubt that I was equal to anything, and that from this time he should leave the domestic management entirely in my hands.

I could not but feel that I did not quite merit this trust, but determined that I would try to improve, so that I might do so in the future. As a step in the right direction, I devoted myself to learning to cook, and, after placing before my patient Jack a few most extraordinary dishes, really began to make a little progress in the art. Still, whenever we had "a few friends," which happened rather frequently, the services of the professed cook were called into requisition, and as my knowledge of cookery increased I began to see that she went about her work in the most expensive way. Also Mary Ann drew my attention to the fact that she took away with her, each time she came, "broken victuals" that would, economically prepared, have made many a good meal for us.

These considerations, added to the fact that the pile of sovereigns was becoming sensibly diminished, made me resolve to dispense with her services. I told her so, and at first she seemed inclined to re-

monstrate, but seeing I was determined, she looked insolently at me, and saying, "I didn't think it would be over *quite* so soon," withdrew in high dudgeon. Things were going on in this way, and we were drawing near the end of the quarter, when one day my husband, who had not many expenses, and consequently did not very frequently pay a visit to the money-drawer, went to it to get a few shillings, and in a minute or two came down, looking very white and agitated.

"We have been robbed!" he said.

"Oh, Jack! what do you mean?"

"There are only £15 in the money-drawer. Are you quite sure Mary Ann is honest?"

"I believe she is thoroughly honest. I have no doubt the money has been taken by ourselves only. I was thinking of speaking to you, dear Jack. We cannot have friends to dinner so frequently as we have had lately without paying for it, and really for the last two months we have denied ourselves nothing."

"I thought you would speak if we went too fast," said Jack, looking very much annoyed.

"And I thought you knew best," I answered. "Then you must remember I have paid for everything. There are no bills owing."

"There will be bills owing now," said Jack. "However," he added, bitterly, "I have no doubt that can be easily arranged. After the lavish way in which you

have bought things, the tradespeople will give you any amount of credit."

"Oh, they have all said they would be glad to open an account," I said; "but I did not want to do it."

Once more quarter-day came, and Jack brought home his sovereigns. But there was no question how to dispose of them this time. The rent was due, so were the taxes; Jack's insurance had to be paid; the gas-man had called twice for his money; the coal was out, and now was the time to lay in our winter stock, unless we wished to pay a very high price for it; Mary Ann wanted her wages; and cold winds were beginning to blow, and Jack sorely needed a new overcoat.

The overcoat did not receive a second thought. Jack said it was impossible he could have it. The bills were all to be paid, and when that was done we had only £25 wherewith to begin the quarter.

"We must remember that these bills will fall due every time," said Jack. "We have had a bitter lesson; let us profit by it."

But, unfortunately, it was very difficult to profit by it. Our lavish hospitality had brought round us a number of butterfly friends, who were continually dropping in upon us just about meal-times, and they added very considerably to our expenses. The third

quarter opened upon us more darkly than ever. We had no ready money in hand, and after paying our bills we had only £18 left. The fourth quarter was still worse, and our anxieties were considerably increased by the prospect that was now before us.

I am afraid I was not much of a help to Jack at this time, for I was continually crying. Jack was very patient with me, but his face grew every day more and more anxious. He used to come in, in his shabby overcoat, he who was always so neat and tidy in his bachelor days, and try to talk brightly to me, till my heart ached. At last, Baby came. The doctor received his fee, and terrible extravagance went on downstairs under nurse's management. I knew the drawer must be almost empty; I knew that the tradespeople were getting quite anxious about their money; and I was so anxious about their bills, that it prevented me from getting well. One day the doctor came, and seeing I was very weak, ordered me to have beef-tea and mutton chops, and everything wholesome and nourishing. When Jack came home, he was told what the doctor had said. He looked very grave, and went to the drawer, but came back without taking anything out of it. I knew the reason. At last he said—

“I suppose the tradespeople won't supply us any more?”



“Not till they are paid,” I answered. “I am terrified now every time I hear a knock at the door, for fear it should be one of them coming for his money.”

“I have only fourpence-halfpenny in the world,” he said, after a pause.

“Poor Jack!” I answered. “Never mind, dear. Don’t trouble about me. It is quite a mistake; I really don’t want the things.”

“Whether you want them or not you shall have them,” he replied, as he rose, then went down-stairs. In a short time I heard him open the front door and shut it gently after him.

In about an hour he returned, bringing me everything I needed. He had procured the money, but at such a cost to his pride and self-respect that he told me afterwards he made a vow on the spot that, at whatever cost, we would free ourselves from the entanglements which were about us. This, I am glad to say, we did, and the steps which we took to accomplish our difficult task will be detailed in another chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

## HOW WE MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

“How soon will you come home at the right time, Jack?” I said to my husband one evening when he came home, as he had done for some time, at about half-past eleven o’clock, looking almost too weary to crawl into bed.

“About the end of next week I hope to have finished,” he answered; “and I am very glad, for I could not keep this up much longer. When will you be ready to take your old place again, little woman?” he continued, gently.

“I am ready to take it at any time, though I hope I shall never fill it in the same way again. Jack, I am afraid I was the cause of our trouble.”

“I think the blame may be divided between us very equally,” said Jack. “You went on spending money without much thought, but I was to blame for leaving it to you. I had no business to throw the entire responsibility on you as I did. However, we must try to do better for the future.”

“But you forget we are so behindhand. How are

we to get straight? I don't know how you have managed to keep us going at all."

"I will tell you all about it," said Jack, "and then we will arrange our plans for the future. You remember that night when we were talking together, I told you I had only 4½d.?"

"Yes, I remember."

"I felt then that something must be done, and that the difficulty must be faced. I managed to raise £4, and this gave me breathing-time. Then I collected together the tradesmen's bills and looked them carefully over."

"They did not come to much," said I. "There was very little owing when I was laid aside."

"They amounted altogether to £20 14s."

"How could that be?" said I. "I am sure it was wrong. We had had very few things indeed; certainly not enough to make up such a sum as that."

"Ah, little woman!" said my husband, "you forget how quickly small sums mount up. Let one of the lessons we have learnt be, not to run up bills; and another be, to buy nothing that we cannot spare the money immediately to pay for."

"Whatever did you do?" I asked.

"I found we were in this position," said Jack: "we owed £20 14s. It was six weeks to quarter-day. It was an unusually expensive time with us, and we had

£3 12s. in hand. This being the case, I determined to borrow a few pounds from the friends with whom we have been so intimate lately, and——”

“Well,” I said, “I suppose it was the best thing to do. After all, it is better to owe money to friends than to tradespeople whom one knows nothing about.”

“So I thought,” said Jack, bitterly. “However, I can tell you this—amongst them all there was not one who would lend us even £5 to help us out of our difficulties.”

“Jack, you don’t say so! Would not Mr. ——?”

“Don’t let us go over the names,” said Jack; “and let us try to forget the fact. Amongst those who were most intimate with us, and who we thought were our friends, there was not one who would help us to the extent of £5. One or two of them did kindly volunteer the information that they thought ‘we had been going too fast,’ and that ‘the kind of thing we had been indulging in generally ended in one way;’ but that was all.”

I was so much astonished at hearing this that I could scarcely speak.

“There is no good in making a long story of it,” said Jack. “The end of it was that I was obliged to go to the tradespeople and tell them I was in difficulties, but if they would wait a short time they should certainly be paid. It was a very disagreeable piece of

business, but I got through it. On the whole, they were very forbearing. I believe they saw I meant honestly; and, at any rate, it put a stop to their applying constantly at the house for their money, which was so annoying to you. One day I was walking down to business, feeling very anxious, when I met Uncle Dick——”

“Cross old Uncle Dick?” said I. “He was sure to be disagreeable.”

“Don’t speak of him like that,” said Jack. “He doesn’t deserve it. He began talking about ordinary things; and I don’t know how it was, but before I knew what I was about I had told him our trouble. He said he had been afraid there was something of the sort; and then he told me that, though he could not afford to help me, he could recommend me to three or four people who wanted their books keeping, so that, if I would work out of office hours, I might earn a little extra money to get us out of the scrape.”

“And that is why you have been working so late?” said I.

“Yes, it is,” said Jack; “and I was very fortunate to get the chance. I have worked harder than ever I did before, but I think we are nearly straight again, or shall be at the end of next week, when my work will be finished. And now, dear, I want us to arrange

together again, and in a different way, how we will lay out our income."

"What do you think will be the best plan, then?" said I. "We won't have anything more to do with the drawer with two keys."

"I propose that we first put down everything that *must* be paid. We will see what is left, and give a certain portion to housekeeping expenses and a certain portion to dress. I have drawn out a rough list, and here it is. You see if I have got everything. Rent, £35; taxes and rates, £10. I think"—Jack here interrupted himself by saying—"that we are paying more rent than we ought to do with an income of £250 a year; but here we are, and it would cost a good deal to move."

"Besides," I said, "our house is very cheap, considering where we live."

"Nothing is cheap that we have not got money to pay for," said Jack, sternly resolute. "However, rents are high here, and I dare say we should have difficulty in getting one for much less.—Coal, £8."

"What have you founded your estimates on?" said I.

"I have collected our bills of last year, and I have knocked a little off each one, because I consider we were then exceedingly extravagant."

"What did we spend upon coal last year?" said I.

"Why, £10," said Jack.

"So we are to burn £2-worth less. Go on."

"Gas, £5; wages, £12; insurance (life and fire), £25. Are there any more regular expenses that you think of?"

"Dress," I suggested.

"Wait," said Jack; "we must not give anything out for dress till we see what we can afford. The sums in this list amount to £95; that leaves us £155 for dress and housekeeping expenses."

"£20 a year each is not much for dress. Could we afford that?" said I.

"I don't think we could," said Jack. "We had better say £15 a year each, and £5 for baby; you have a good many things to get for him, I know; that will be £35. Now, before we can say anything about what we are to spend over housekeeping, we must remember something else. Supposing we go on a railway journey, or have sickness and need to call in the doctor, or Mary Ann breaks the crockery, and it has to be replaced—where is the money to come from for these things?"

"It must not come out of the housekeeping," said I, "or I shall never know where I am."

"No, that will never do," said Jack; "it will be as bad as the drawer with two keys. I am sure the secret of making both ends meet is to find out how much you can afford to spend *in detail*."

“And to spend that and no more, of course,” said I, laughing.

“No,” said Jack; “to spend a little less than that, so as to be on the safe side. We think we have calculated everything; there is sure to be something we have forgotten, and that, coming upon us unexpectedly, may upset all our schemes. There is another consideration, too: are we to save nothing? We are both young, both strong; I don’t suppose we shall ever be in a better position for saving than we are now. We shall not be wise if we spend every halfpenny we have, and put nothing away for a rainy day.”

“You are gradually reducing my prospects for housekeeping,” said I; “but let me know what you propose.”

Jack thought a few moments, and made some calculations with his pencil, then said—

“We have £155 left to work upon. Out of that we must give £35 a year to dress. I propose that we give £10 for incidental and unforeseen expenses, and that we save £12, which will be £1 per month. If we *can* save more, all the better; but we will try for that first. That will leave you little more than £1 17s. 8d. a week for housekeeping expenses.”

“And out of that I have to pay for provisions and laundry?”



“Yes.”

“Well, I will try my best.”

“That won’t do,” said Jack. “It *must* be done. I have no doubt you will find it hard, but we will work together. What we cannot afford we will go without. I am quite willing to accept whatever you provide, and to dispense with what you do not provide; and I would very much rather eat dry bread only from Monday morning till Saturday night than get into the trouble we were in before.”

“Then we will both begin in that spirit,” said I, half laughing and half crying, as I held out my hand to my husband. “I will try hard to get clever, and to make the money go a long way; but I promise you I will never spend what I have not got.”

We shook hands over the agreement. We set to work *together* (and that was one great secret of our success). Again and again we had to go without things which we should have liked, and things, too, which sometimes seemed necessities. Three more children were given to us, and as our family increased the difficulty of making both ends meet increased too. We kept to our plans, however. I should have given in, and got wrong again and again, but Jack was firm. Our former difficulties had taught him a lesson he never forgot. After two or three years I gained a little wisdom from experience, and was able to lay out

the money far more advantageously than I had done at first. The result of our endeavours was, that we never repeated our one great failure. We *did* manage to make both ends meet ; more than that, we managed to save out of our income. The very fact that there was a nest-egg was an inducement to us to add to it ; for, as every one with a little experience knows, the people who spend money extravagantly are those who live from hand to mouth, not those who have something laid by for a rainy day. Jack's position gradually improved ; and in a few years we came to be glad that we so early had that short, sharp, and bitter experience from which we had learnt so much.

## CHAPTER III.

## REMOVING.

“WE really cannot stop another winter in this house, Jack,” said I one evening to my husband. “It is so damp below-stairs that it is most unhealthy. During the summer it may be all very well, but I quite dread the approach of winter, knowing that it means coughs and colds for the children and rheumatism for me. You do not feel it as we do, for you are away all day, and then sit in the up-stairs rooms, but we——”

“Well, well, my dear,” said Jack, “if it really is necessary to remove, of course it must be done ; but you cannot wonder that I am reluctant to see the necessity, for it is an awful bore. Where are we to move to ?”

“We had better employ our evenings during the next three months in looking about,” I replied. “Wherever we see a notice put up outside a house in a suitable situation, we must make inquiries about the terms and the accommodation, and very likely we shall meet with something in that way.”

“That is no use at all,” said Jack. “It would be a

good plan in some places, I don't doubt, but not in a populous neighbourhood like this. I was speaking the other day to a gentleman who has a good deal of experience in this sort of thing, and he said that in the healthy, well-drained parts of almost all large towns houses are in such request that notices are scarcely ever put up to the most desirable ones, which are let through agents before the old tenants leave."

"Then what must we do?" said I.

"I think the best thing will be for me to write to five or six house agents, and tell them what rooms I want, and what rent I am prepared to pay, then they will send me a list of suitable houses. You can look over these during the day, and if there are any you think likely, I can go and see them after business hours."

"Very well, I will do so," I answered. "But I had better understand clearly what we have to look for, and what we have to avoid. Of course I know the accommodation we require; and I know we don't want a damp house——"

"Can you tell when a house is damp?" interrupted Jack.

"Yes, I think our experience here has taught me that. I shall examine carefully the bottom parts of the walls, and the colour of the edges of the boards in

the lower rooms, and if they are dark in colour, or feel moist, I shall know from that alone that the house is damp. But this house is built on clay. If we were to get a gravelly or chalky soil, we should be all right, should we not?"

"At any rate, we should stand a better chance. Now, let us see if you understand what you are looking for. After we have got the requisite number of rooms, we want—first, a house built upon either gravel, chalk, sand, or rock; secondly, a nice piece of ground for a garden; thirdly, a house with a southerly aspect; fourthly, a house with a distinct and separate drainage properly connected with the main sewer."

"But how can I tell whether a house is properly drained or not?" said I.

"You can notice, when you enter, whether there is any unpleasant smell, and make inquiries if possible of the last tenant. But I will see after the drainage. If a house suited us in every other respect, I would have it examined by a competent person before we went into it. We must be satisfied on that point."

"That would be much the best. What else is there, Jack?"

"We want a house with well-lighted, lofty rooms—with a good water-supply—with chimneys that do not smoke—situated in a respectable, healthy neighbourhood, where the access is easy and convenient,

and where the taxes do not bear an undue proportion to the rent.”

“And fitted with a bath-room,” I added, “and with hot and cold water up-stairs—with the kitchen on the ground floor—with all the windows opening and closing properly, and—— You need not laugh, Jack. If we do go through the agonies of removing, we hope to benefit by the change, and at any rate we know what we should like.”

“What we should like is one thing, what we shall get for the rent that will suit us is quite another,” said my husband; “but we shall see.”

Jack wrote to the agents as he had proposed. In two or three days the lists arrived, and I began my work of looking over the numerous desirable residences which were presented to our notice. Some people enjoy looking over houses; I cannot say that I do, or at any rate, whatever enjoyment I might have felt at the commencement of the undertaking was quite exhausted before it was over. I must have looked over eighty or a hundred houses before we were suited. Some were too small, some too large, some too dark, some too glaring, some too expensive, some not quite good enough, some damp enough to provide rheumatism for every member of the family who lived in them, and at length I almost came to the conclusion that the house we then occupied might, considering its rent, be

looked upon as the healthiest and cheapest house in the neighbourhood. At last every house on my list was crossed out excepting three. These Jack was taken to inspect, and he decided that one of them would do for us, for though it by no means possessed all the virtues we desired, it was commodious, healthily situated, well drained, and not too expensive. As it had not been done up for some years, the landlord agreed to paint it inside and out, to whitewash the ceilings, paper the rooms, and put it into thorough repair. We took it upon a lease, and rejoiced that that work was over.

“I wonder what is the best way to set about removing,” said I to Jack. “Do you remember when the Grahams moved, how quickly they seemed to be settled in their new home? It was like magic. I should like to know how they did it.”

“You had better call upon Mrs. Graham and ask her,” said Jack. “I am looking forward to the time with great dread, I assure you, and the more quickly it can be done the better pleased I shall be.”

Accordingly I called on Mrs. Graham; when I told her we were to move, she congratulated me very heartily, and said that she felt sure we should like the change.

“And how are you going to set about moving, my dear?” she asked.

“That is just what I wanted to get your advice about,” I replied. “Of course it is a great undertaking for us, with our family. When you came into this house you were so quickly settled and comfortable in it, that I felt I could not do better than adopt your plans, if you would tell them to me.”

“That I will, and with pleasure. First of all we had every chimney swept in the new house, then we had done to it whatever whitewashing and paper-hanging was necessary——”

“Fortunately for us, the landlord is going to do up the house throughout,” I interrupted.

“That is good, and will save you a great deal of expense and trouble. If you can arrange it, I should have the chimneys swept before the men commence operations.”

“Of course I can. And when they have finished, I am going to have the house cleaned thoroughly from top to bottom.”

“And after that, have all the carpets, with the exception of the stair carpets, fitted and put down.”

“The carpets put down before the furniture is taken into the house?” said I.

“Certainly,” answered my friend. “You asked the reason why we were so quickly settled. That was the principal cause. You see, when you are removing you have to put up with a certain amount of discom-



fort, and I think it is much better to go through that at the old house than at the new one. Besides which, it is much easier to plan and put down carpets in an empty room than it is when the furniture has to be moved backwards and forwards. Therefore, I had all the carpets taken up in good time, thoroughly shaken or cleaned, and afterwards taken to the new house, planned, and laid down."

"How did you manage about making the carpets and fitting them to the new rooms, then?" said I. "Did you employ an upholsterer?"

"I employed an upholsteress, who did the work, I believe, quite as well, and at about half the cost that an upholsterer would have done. I can recommend to you the one I employed, though there are plenty of these women about. They go out working at so much a day, and will make and plan carpets, hang beds, cover mattresses, make curtains, or do any of the kind of work that upholsterers usually undertake."

"And of course whilst the woman was at work you were without carpets at home?"

"Yes, but we were accustomed to the rooms, and the furniture was all in its place, so that we were not very uncomfortable; and we made up our minds to put up with what discomfort there was for the short time that was necessary. Whilst the carpets were being made, the furniture was cleaned and polished,

and repaired where it was required. Then when all was ready, we hired a large van, had the furniture put into it without any packing, taken to the new house, and put at once into its place."

"Did not the men spoil the carpets with their boots?"

"Wherever the men had to step we covered the carpets over with dust-sheets or brown paper, and they were not at all dirtied. It is necessary to look after the men, and see that they do put each article into its right room. They are rather partial to popping things down where it is most convenient, and when this is allowed, it makes a good deal of work afterwards. A responsible person ought to be in the house when the van arrives, and as each article is brought in, ought to give directions which room it is to be carried into."

"I can see it will be very quickly arranged after that," said I.

"I have no doubt," said Mrs. Graham, "that if you do your moving like this, and are tolerably energetic about it, even with your little family, you may be so far settled at the end of the second day, that a stranger coming into the house would not know that you were new-comers. How are you going to manage about the blinds?"

"I don't quite know what will be for the best," I

answered. "We have Venetian blinds to fit all the windows in our present house, but they will not do for the new ones. The out-going tenants have good blinds, which were made for the windows, and which they would sell at a reasonable price; but it seems such a shame to buy new blinds, when we have all those old ones."

"I know it does, but that is one of the expenses that *must* be. If you can buy blinds that fit at an inexpensive rate, you will find it cheaper to do so than to have the old ones altered. Indeed, you are likely to lose more money by trying to use them than by selling them even at a sacrifice. Perhaps the people who are coming into your present house would take them off your hands."

"Yes, they might. It is not pleasant, though, to try and push a number of fixtures upon any one."

"If it is an advantage to them you need not mind. At any rate, I am quite sure that things may often be bought very cheaply in that way. I bought the carpet in this room of the lady who lived here before us. The room is a good-sized one, and the carpet is Brussels, and in excellent condition; yet I only gave four guineas for it."

"Four guineas! I should think it cost fifteen or sixteen."

"So it would have done if I had had to buy it at a

shop, and have it fitted down. But very likely it would not have come in nicely for a new room, and it was better for the lady to sell it, even at a loss, than to have it cut up to waste. If the tenants have not left the house into which you are going, I should certainly advise you to inquire whether there are any carpets, &c., to dispose of. You will, in all probability, be able to purchase canvas for the hall, gas-fittings, or blinds, at a much cheaper rate than you would get them at a shop. Of course I am supposing that the people are clean, and the things are good. Carpets three-parts worn would be dear at a very low price."

"And you do not pack anything?"

"Nothing of the household furniture. The large vans which are at present used will take most things just as they are, and they can be carried in them from one house to the other. I think it is best to leave the packing even of the glass and china to the proper men. It is their business, and they will be more likely to avoid breakages than you will, with all your care. If I were going from one part of the country to another, I should not pack the furniture."

"Should you not?"

"No. I have had a painful experience on that subject. Some years ago we removed from one town to another, a distance of about two hundred miles. We decided to bring everything with us, very foolishly as

we found afterwards ; for if we had sold the heavy common things, we could have bought new furniture with the money that we paid for the carriage of them."

"And I suppose you packed everything?"

"Yes. We got estimates from three or four people in that line of business. One of them advised us very strongly to have our furniture put unpacked in the ordinary way into the trucks which they used specially for the carriage of furniture by rail, and assured us that there was very little fear of its being at all spoilt. Another as strongly recommended us to have everything bound round with straw, and said that, though a little more expensive, the plan was much safer. We, feeling very desirous to take all the care we could, adopted the latter plan, and very much we regretted it."

"Why?"

"Because, first of all, it was such a trouble to get all the straw off again. Instead of being able to carry the things to their places, they had to be put into a back yard to have the straw carefully removed. Then the surface was so much dulled that it had to be polished again and again before it was fit to be seen ; and, besides, it was the more expensive plan of the two."

"But if you had employed the other people, your things might have been more spoilt."

“I think not. Some friends of ours had to move to a distance shortly afterwards. They profited by our experience, and adopted the other plan. Their removal was managed so cleverly that the only injury they sustained was the breakage of one cup. Perhaps they were particularly fortunate, but still that was the fact.”

“Well,” said I, rising to take my leave, “I am very glad to think we have not to move such a distance as that. For I expect, manage it as cleverly as you may, it is a very uncomfortable time. Does not the old proverb say that ‘three removes are as bad as a fire?’”

“Yes, it does,” said Mrs. Graham, laughing. “But for all that, when it is done with forethought and care, I do not think a removal is any worse than a thorough spring cleaning. Of course, I have had my troubles and perplexities, and I remember that even the prospect of my first ‘move’ so distracted me that I fairly broke down and cried ; but experience is a wholesome teacher, and I shall be delighted if mine will prove of a little use to you.”

It proved invaluable.

## CHAPTER IV.

HOUSE-CLEANING : AND THE BEST WAY TO SET  
ABOUT IT.

THE first thing to aim at in beginning the "thorough clean," is that it should be attended with as little discomfort as possible to those members of the household who do not actually take part in it. I think the wife and mother ought to determine that no forethought or contrivance that she can possibly exert shall be spared by which her husband and her sons may be shielded from discomfort. Of course everybody knows that whitewashers, painters, and paper-hangers are members of society who entirely refuse to be smuggled quietly into a house and pushed gently out of it. Wherever they have sway they make their presence felt ; and when they appear, the very best thing the gentleman of the house can do is to start on that business journey he has been talking about so long, and let the women and the whitewashers have it to themselves. It is not very often, however, that all the rooms of the house are painted, and the ceilings whitewashed, in one season ; and with a little arrangement the cleaning of a

large portion of the house may be got over without the gentlemen suspecting that it is going on. I think it is a good plan to take two or three of the bed-rooms that are of the least importance, and have them cleaned gradually quite early in the year, before the regular cleaning comes on ; so that when the work is really begun, it will not feel to be quite so overpowering. It is very disheartening for servants to have to set to work, and clean a house of even moderate size right through, one room after another ; and if part of the house can be done easily like this, it feels to be a great help.

In cleaning my house I always adopt the old-fashioned plan of beginning at the top and coming down to the bottom, by which means the dirt is not trodden backwards and forwards. I think it is a good plan where two servants are kept to let one do the cleaning, and the other attend to the ordinary work of the house, so as to keep things comfortable. These minor details, however, must be arranged by every mistress to suit her own convenience.

And now let us see what has to be done before a room can be said to be thoroughly cleaned. The carpet must be taken up ; all the articles of furniture must be removed out of their places, and either taken entirely out of the room, or covered with dust-sheets ; the pictures, curtains, and blinds must be taken down



and nothing ought to be put back again until it has been properly cleaned. Then the chimney must be swept, and when the soot has been removed, the room also. If it has been decided that the whitewashers and paper-hangers are not to be called in, the ceiling and walls must be rubbed with a soft cloth, which has been securely fastened upon the end of a broom. The paper must be cleaned, and if the room is a bed-room, the bed must be taken to pieces, carefully examined, and the joints purified. The grate and fire-irons must be black-leaded and brightened, the paint washed (including the wood-work about the windows), the windows cleaned, the floor scrubbed, the carpet beaten, and the furniture and pictures polished. Then, when everything is quite clean, the carpets can be laid down, and the furniture restored to its original position.

Perhaps the best thing I can do is to take each of these items separately, and give my idea of the best way of doing them.

*To Clean Wall-paper.*—Take off the dust with a soft cloth. Make a lump of very stiff dough with a little flour and water, and rub the wall gently downwards, taking the length of the arm at each stroke, and in this way go round the room. As the dough becomes dirty, cut the soiled part off. In the second round, commence the stroke a little above where the last one ended, and be very careful not to cross the paper, or to

go up again. Ordinary papers cleaned in this way will look fresh and bright, and almost as good as new. Some papers, however—and these the most expensive ones—will not clean nicely ; and in order to ascertain whether or not a paper can be cleaned, it is best to try it first in some obscure corner, which will not be noticed if the result is unsatisfactory. If there are any broken places in the wall, fill them up with a mixture of equal parts of plaster of Paris and silver sand, made into a paste with a little water. Then cover the place with a little piece of paper, like the rest, if it can be had. When a room is newly papered, a few yards of the paper should be preserved for repairs. If there are any spots of grease on the walls, mix some fuller's-earth with ox-gall and cold water, and spread this on the spot. Pin a little blotting-paper over the mixture, and leave it for three or four hours ; then brush it off carefully, when in all probability the grease will be removed. If not, renew the operation—which, however, is not likely to be successful if the paper is one which will not clean nicely.

*Grates, &c.*—Black-lead black grates and fenders, and polish them in every part. If a grate has been neglected some time, it may be varnished with Brunswick black, which is made as follows :—Melt half a pound of asphaltum, and mix with it very gradually a quarter of a pint of linseed oil and one pint of oil of

turpentine. If too thick, add a little more turpentine. The asphaltum should cost sixpence, the linseed oil three-halfpence, and the oil of turpentine eightpence. The range may be brushed with this mixture, and left to dry. When fires are used it will need to be black-leaded in the ordinary way. Polished grates and irons should be rubbed every day thoroughly with a dry leather, and in damp weather two or three times a day. If this were done regularly, no polishing would be required. When once they have been rusted or dulled, they should be rubbed with emery-paper, or with a polish made as follows:—Mix equal parts of turpentine and sweet oil, and stir in as much emery-powder as will make a thin paste. Rub this on the steel with a piece of old flannel, rub it off with another piece, and brighten with leather and emery.

*Carpets* must be taken up and beaten on the wrong side first, and afterwards very gently on the right side; and care should be taken not to use sticks with points, or the carpets may be injured. After a carpet has been beaten, it should not be laid down until the floor is quite dry, or the nails may rust and spoil it. If after being beaten the carpet still looks dirty, it may be washed and made to look fresh and bright in the following manner:—Procure a quart of bullock's gall from the butcher's, and mix with it three quarts of soft cold water. Rub this into the carpet, either with a

clean flannel or a soft brush ; rinse the lather off with cold water, and rub the carpet dry with a soft cloth. If there are any very dirty places, wash them with gall only. It will be best to speak for the gall a day or two before it is wanted, and it ought not to cost more than a few pence.

*Paint.*—Soda should never be used in washing paint. The best way to do it is to put a handful of finely-powdered whitening into a bowl, having ready a piece of soft flannel and some clean warm water. Wet the flannel, squeeze it dry, dip it into the whitening, and rub the paint up and down until it is clean. Wash off with cold water ; and when it is nearly dry, finish it with a soft leather. If the paint be very dirty, mix a little bullock's gall with the whitening. In washing the wainscot, care must be taken not to touch the edge of the paper with the wet flannel, as this would give the room a shabby appearance.

*The Beds.*—Pull down the beds, and carefully examine and purify every crevice and joint, together with the mattresses and bindings, so that if there are any unwelcome visitors, their presence may be discovered. If anything disagreeable is already in the bed, leave it without curtains or furniture for a few weeks, and brush every part of the bedstead with spirit of naphtha. When the bedsteads are made of wood, the joints may be smeared with a mixture of soft-soap and

strong pepper. All bedsteads should be taken to pieces twice a year, in the spring and in the autumn, and the mattresses, palliasses, and feather beds beaten. Once a year the blankets and covers should be washed, and the furniture thoroughly cleansed.

*Floors.*—When floors are washed regularly, it is best to scour them with sand and cold water only, laid on with plenty of elbow-grease, as it is called, as soap and soda have a tendency to darken the boards. If they are only washed occasionally, some fuller's-earth should be dried, and made into a paste with a little boiling water, then mixed with rather less than half the quantity of silver sand. This mixture should be sprinkled on the boards, and they should be then well scrubbed in the direction of the grain of the wood, and afterwards washed with cold water. If the floor be spotted with grease, mix a quarter of a pound of pearl-ash with one pint of hot water, and scrub the floor with this and a little fine sand.

*Marble Mantel-pieces.*—The mantel-pieces must be washed with soap and warm water. If there are any stains, mix two ounces of powdered pumice-stone with two ounces of powdered chalk and a quarter of a pound of soda. Sift these, then make them into a paste with cold water. Rub the marble with the paste, and afterwards wash it with soap and water.

*Pictures.*—Brush the frames with a soft brush, and

blow the dust out of any crevices which cannot otherwise be reached. Clean the glass with a wet leather and a soft cloth, and be careful not to touch the gilt frames with the damp cloth. Frames may be made to look fresh and bright by being brushed over with a mixture composed of one ounce of soda and three ounces of white of egg. If very shabby, the only satisfactory way of treating them is to send them to be re-gilt. I have never found any other method successful.

*Lacquered Gas Chandeliers.*—Clean them by rubbing them with a soft flannel dipped in a mixture made of equal parts of vinegar and stale beer. Wash the globes with whitening and water.

*Chimney Glasses.*—Rub these over lightly, either with wet whitening or with a rag dipped in spirits of wine, and polish them with a soft leather.

*Venetian Blinds.*—Unfasten the tape at the bottom of the blind, and draw out all the laths. Wash them with lukewarm water and soap, dry them thoroughly, and put them up again, being careful that the cords which come down in the middle of the tapes are put in properly, as if this is not done the narrow tapes will fray.

After the furniture has been restored to its place, it should be cleaned and polished. Great care should be taken that all the dirt is rubbed off before the polish

is put on, and in polishing it use a small quantity only of the paste. The principal thing required is good rubbing. The following will be found a good furniture polish:—Mix thoroughly a quarter of a pint of turpentine, ditto spirits of wine, ditto vinegar, and ditto linseed oil. Put the mixture into a bottle and shake it well, then rub it briskly on the furniture, and afterwards polish with a soft duster.

Winter curtains which are to be laid aside during the summer, should be shaken, brushed, and folded neatly, and put away with dry bran spread between the folds. This will make them look bright and fresh when they are taken out. All flannel and woollen goods should have lumps of camphor, or, better still, strips of Russian leather, put into the box with them, and they should be taken out and examined at least once in two months.

When every room in the house has been cleaned, the passages and stairs should be done, and the same directions followed with them. Then the fresh white curtains, the clean antimacassars, the pretty fire ornaments, may be brought out, with whatever adornments taste or fancy may dictate. If, when all is finished, both mistress and servant do not think their labour well repaid by the improved appearance and increased comfort of the house, all I can say is that they are very unlike the people with whom I am acquainted.

One word in conclusion. There is an old proverb which says, "If you want your work well done, do it yourself." I can scarcely recommend a lady to clean her house entirely by herself, but I am quite sure of one thing, she would find it to her advantage to personally superintend the cleaning of it. The way to obtain expedition, thoroughness, and cheerful work from the servants is to join partially in it ; and any lady who will spend part of her time in the room where the cleaning is going on, busying herself if she likes in a little of the lighter work, such as washing the ornaments or polishing the pictures, will find the truth of the saying, "The eye of a mistress is worth two pairs of hands."



## CHAPTER V.

## SMALL ECONOMIES.

I REMEMBER reading a story many years ago about two young ladies, whose excellent parents decided that they were sufficiently advanced in years to be entrusted with a quarterly allowance of money, wherewith to purchase their wardrobes, and provide for their various necessities. One of these girls was named Emily, and the other Jane. Emily, in the delight of her heart at the unaccustomed possession of wealth, immediately paid a visit to the nearest shops and purchased right and left whatever struck her fancy, until she suddenly discovered that all her money was gone, and that she had nothing sensible to show for it. Jane, on the contrary, when she entered a shop and was tempted to buy anything, always stepped a little on one side and asked herself, "Can I do without it?" If the question could be answered in the affirmative, she shut her purse and triumphantly withdrew, mistress of the situation. I forget the conclusion of the story, but I have a general impression that the virtuous Jane lived to be a shining light to all her friends and acquaintance, whilst over

Emily's experience Charity itself could only drop a tear.

Though we laugh at this story, we are compelled to feel that those who wish to achieve small economies cannot do better than follow the example of the heroine, and carefully abstain from small extravagances, for this is the secret of making money go a long way.

If any who read these lines are conscious that their pockets are made of such materials that whatever money is put into them will burn a hole until it gets out, I would advise them, whenever they take the air, to leave their money at home ; or, better still, to keep an exact account of every halfpenny they spend. It is astonishing how foolish small extravagances appear, when they have to be put down in black and white, after the temptation to indulge in them is over. And they must be put down in detail, and not conveniently classed together under the general heading of "sundries." The item "sundries" is never admitted into well-kept household accounts. No one who has not tried it would believe what a check it is upon personal expenditure to keep a thorough account of money spent, and not only a check, but a help ; for prices may be compared, and thus lessons learned from experience.

Generally speaking, whenever large savings have

been made, they have been effected in little sums. Very few persons of ordinary honesty deliberately set to work to make large purchases which they cannot afford, and yet numbers spend just as much in the long run in little things that they scarcely think worthy of notice. It is very difficult to realise fully the value of small sums. If the halfpennies and pennies that lie loose in the pocket were properly appreciated, there would not be so much pecuniary embarrassment in the world as there is. "Many a mickle makes a muckle:" this is true of nothing more than of halfpennies and pennies.

These little savings, as a rule, must be made in personal expenditure more than in anything else. What is spent over the household is generally needed, but the small personal luxuries which cost so little are not. And when any saving is made in this way, the money should be put aside as saved, instead of being mixed with the spending fund, and additions made to it as frequently as possible; that will make you understand as soon as anything what small economies amount to.

I knew a good old gentleman who astonished his children by keeping a "Tis-but box." Whenever he heard any of them say, "I am going to buy so-and-so, 'tis but a penny, or a shilling, or a pound," he very quietly put the sum mentioned into the box, and at

the end of a year told them what it amounted to. The total was so considerable that they never again spoke disrespectfully of "'Tis-butts."

When money is put aside to be saved, it should be put in some place where it cannot be directly got at. I cannot speak too highly of the Post Office Savings Bank for this purpose. The very fact that a little trouble and formula has to be gone through before it can be obtained prevents its being spent many a time when it most certainly would be if it were close at hand.

I said just now that what was spent for the household was generally a necessary outlay, and yet there are two or three ways in which money can be saved here that I should like to mention.

The first is by buying in large quantities. Of course the danger is that when there is a stock of things to "run at," as servants say, they will be more extravagantly used. All I can say on this point is that they must not be "run at." A proper quantity must be portioned out, and the rest put away. Then it will be found that articles may be bought both cheaper and better in large quantities than in small ones.

Another way to save expense is to pay for everything as you get it. If you do this you will avoid overcharge, and will buy far less. If the money had

to be put down at the moment, many an unnecessary purchase would be avoided. People who have limited incomes are those who can least afford to live on credit, and unfortunately they do it more than any others.

I heard of a working man the other day who was very desirous to save, and yet in looking over his expenditure he could not detect any extravagance in any part of it. He came to the conclusion that the only way in which he could possibly economise was to walk to his work instead of riding, and to take his dinner with him from home instead of buying it in the City. He did this, and put away the money thus saved, and in a few years he found he had in his possession enough to buy the cottage in which he lived. He was, besides, much better in health for the regular exercise he had taken.

Speaking of dinners reminds me to say that it is no economy to live poorly. Nature requires a certain amount of nourishment, and will have it, or be revenged, and the revenge will in all probability take the form of a long doctor's bill, or diminished working power. This sort of saving is "penny wise and pound foolish." The things to save out of are shams, false appearances, and self-indulgences, not necessities. Where is the saving in working in a dim light, to save candles or gas, and injuring the sight? in wearing

boots that take in water, and bringing on rheumatic fever? in living on poor food, and lowering the system? Far better wear a shabby hat a week or two longer than usual, or dispense altogether with that piece of finery you were contemplating. The worst of it is, however, that people are generally much more willing to dispense with necessaries that make no show, rather than with useless extravagances that afford an opportunity for a display which every one sees through.

Before I conclude, I must say one word of warning in reference to small economies. We continually read in the newspapers of people who die in misery and poverty, who have perhaps received help from the parish; and after their death money is found, which they have hidden in all sorts of odd nooks and corners. With these unfortunates saving has become a mania, and of all manias I think it is one of the most deplorable, for after all money in itself is worth absolutely nothing—it is only valuable for what it will procure. If it will only bring comforts and necessaries for those we love whilst we are able to work, and insure independence for ourselves when we cannot do so, it is worth small economies, forethought, hard work, energy, care, and self-denial. But even gold is bought too dear when the desire for it is allowed to overpower every other feeling.

## CHAPTER VI.

## HOW NOT TO WASTE.

I HAVE heard it said that the food which is regularly wasted in large towns would alone be sufficient to support in health and strength the pauper population of the whole country.

The question at once arises, with whom does the fault of this waste lie? Like the blame of a great many very wrong things, it is divided amongst a large number of people, servants and employers both, scarcely any of whom *intend* to do wrong. When it arises from ignorance, we can only pity and endeavour to enlighten the culprit; when it arises from idleness and carelessness, we blame. I was looking over a house which was to let the other day, with a friend, and in walking round the garden we came upon the dust-bin. The lid was thrown open, and there were conspicuously to be seen several large pieces of bread, dry and hard. My friend could scarcely express her indignation.

“I should like,” she said, “to send that woman to the treadmill.”

“Which woman?” I asked; “there are three servants.”

“The mistress,” she replied. “If that mistress does not know anything about the waste, she ought to know. Depend upon it, her husband, like almost all the men now-a-days, is working far harder than he ought to work, to maintain a home; whilst his wife is sitting up in the drawing-room, and a few feet below her, her servants are allowed to throw away good food like this.”

I must say I thought my friend was right. If a servant does not know better than to waste, her mistress ought to teach her. If, after being taught, she will not do the right thing, she ought to be sent away. It is a notorious fact that the women who make the worst wives for working men are those who have been domestic servants in English homes. They become accustomed to a lavish style of living. They are *never* contented, give them what you will they have *never* had enough; and then they come to marry men with twenty-five or thirty shillings a week, and are unable to make the home comfortable, and they lead miserable lives, deploring the time when they lived as servants in a home where waste was not instantly checked.

Honest, well-meaning girls have no dislike to the mistress looking into every corner; they know that



nothing will follow but credit to themselves. Dishonest or careless girls dislike it because they will be found out, and the sooner they are the better. If the majority of mistresses would do this perseveringly and regularly, the waste of which we complain would be prevented to a very large extent, and the servants would be the ones to be benefited more than any one else. They might grumble now, but they would in all probability come to bless the mistress who taught them habits of economy and care.

Now to enter into detail. Let us see where waste is most usual in ordinary households, and what a mistress who wishes to prevent it would have to look after. She would have to look after the coal, and see that the cinders were properly sifted and burnt; she would have to see that all the bread was used—one loaf finished before another was cut; that wood was not wastefully burnt; that gas was not left flaring in empty rooms; that soap was not left to waste in the water; that candles were put out as soon as they were done with; that all the bones were stewed down for gravy; that all the pieces of fat were melted down for dripping; that the potato and apple peelings were thinly cut; that the butter was carefully used, and not spoilt or wasted in making sauce; and that beer was not allowed to drip away.

It will be evident to any one that, in order to look

after all these things, a mistress would have to spend most of her time in the kitchen ; and this, of course, she cannot do ; but she may do a great deal by visiting her kitchen once or twice every day, and noting these points, by letting her servants see that she notes them, and by trying to instil into their minds an idea of the sinfulness and foolishness of waste. I have always found that the way to reach servants is to tell them earnestly and kindly how bad it will be for themselves, when they have homes of their own, if they contract habits of wastefulness now, and also if they do not learn how to be careful now. The girls are not so very much to blame : they are only following the example of every one they see around them. Another way in which the mistress may alter things is by putting a stop to perquisites of every kind. She will find it well worth her while to raise the wages to make up for the trifling loss to her maids ; but mistresses who allow perquisites are merely making elaborate arrangements to reward dishonesty and encourage theft.

To return to the details I mentioned. Every one acknowledges, now that coal is so dear, that it is most extravagantly used ; and doubtless, in the course of a few years, ranges constructed to lessen the consumption will be in general use ; but meanwhile a great deal might be done to save coal. The cinders, of

course, should be constantly sifted, and when sifted they should be mixed with coal-dust which has been made almost into a paste with water. This dust, which forms a large portion of each ton of coal purchased, is a standing ground for grumbling with a great many people, who have no idea what a good fire may be made with it when it is prepared as I have said. The only things to be remembered are, that it has to be put on the fire and left to cake, and that it will not stand poking. But as to poking a fire, I consider a person who is continually using the poker is utterly destitute of ideas of economy. For a copper fire, rubbish only should be burnt after it is once lighted. For all fires, excepting those which are used for cooking, the baked bricks which are sold by ironmongers, and used to fill up a portion of the range, cannot be too highly recommended. They take up the room which otherwise must be filled by coal, and when the fire has burnt up throw out the heat almost better than the coal would do.

As to bread : there are very few houses in which it is not found difficult to use up the pieces of bread. Some like crumb and some like crust, and whichever of the two is not preferred is in danger of being left. The only thing that can be done is to be careful in cutting the bread, and to use it up every day, so that it shall not get stale. If, after all, any pieces should

be left, they should be placed on a clean dish, carefully covered over, and put in a cool place, then used the next time bread is wanted. Where there are children, and puddings are used, there need be no difficulty with the bread, for so many different and very nice puddings may be made of the pieces, if only they are not fingered, but kept clean and soft.

Perhaps as an old housekeeper I may be allowed to remark that when children have puddings made of bread placed before them very frequently, it is as well to make them vary, and to call them by different names. Among the puddings I may mention the following :—

*Swiss Pudding.*—Fill a buttered dish with alternate layers of pared and sliced apples and finely-grated bread-crumbs. Add sugar and seasoning, place little pieces of butter here and there on the top of the pudding, and bake in a moderate oven. The undermost and uppermost layers should be made of bread-crumbs.

*Bread-and-butter Pudding.*—Butter a pie-dish, cover the bottom with currants, and three-parts fill it with pieces of bread-and-butter. Place a little sugar seasoning and a few currants between each layer. Pour over it a plain custard, which for a small pie-dish may be made with one egg and a little Swiss milk, when no sugar will be required, and let it stand until

the bread is moistened. Bake in a moderate oven. Turn the pudding out of the dish or not, as you may prefer to serve it.

*Bread Plum Pudding.*—Take half a pint of bread broken into small pieces, and pour half a pint of boiling milk over it. Let it soak until soft, then beat it with a fork, and stir into it whilst hot three ounces of butter or beef dripping. Add, when cold, sugar, spices, and plums or currants, and beat all up with two eggs. Fill a basin with the mixture, cover it with a cloth, and steam it until done enough. This pudding is good both hot and cold.

*Hydropathic Pudding.* (As used at the hydropathic establishments, where pastry is not allowed.)—Put a round piece of bread at the bottom of a basin. Line the sides with bread cut into fingers, with a little distance between each piece. Boil any kind of fruit with a little water and sugar until quite soft. Whilst it is hot, put it with a spoon gently into the basin, so as not to displace the bread. Cover the top thickly with pieces of bread cut into dice. Press the pudding down with a plate, and lay a weight upon it. Let it stand some hours, then turn out in a mould. A little custard is of course an improvement.

*Bread Pudding for Juveniles.*—Soak bread-and-jam for two or three hours in cold milk, and serve.

Crusts of bread should be put into a cool oven and

allowed to remain until hard and brown, then crushed to powder and bottled. The powder is useful for garnishing hams, or for strewing over fish which has been egged and crumbed for frying.

In using wood, it should be remembered that one bundle is enough to light two fires. It used to be enough for three, but since the late rise in wood the bundles have been made smaller.

Waste in gas may be in a great measure prevented if it is turned off at the meter during the day. Its escape will thus be prevented through those defective places in the pipes which often exist for some time before they are discovered.

Soap should be cut up and dried for some time before it is used.

In conclusion, let me say that in attempting to prevent waste in small things there is nothing parsimonious. It would be parsimonious to deny your family or your servants or yourself proper comforts—warmth and light, and food and clothing—in order to save the expense. It is not parsimonious to provide only what is necessary for those comforts, and so leave no opportunity for waste. The waste that is practised in the houses of the rich does not inconvenience them, but it is just as blameworthy as if it did. When we think of the thousands who lack comforts, and of the many who have them and waste them, surely the

women who are trying honestly to do their share of the world's work will not consider that the most unimportant part of it is that they should do all in their power to stem the tide of wastefulness, which is ruining so many, and in their own little kingdoms at least be careful to "gather up the fragments that remain, that none may be lost."

## CHAPTER VII.

## HOW TO MAKE JAMS AND PRESERVES.

“Do you intend to make much jam this year, mamma?” said Bertha.

“I should like to make our usual quantity,” I answered. “It is convenient to have a supply in the house. I scarcely know what we should do without it, and the flavour of good home-made jam is infinitely superior to many which are bought at the shops.”

“Ada Thompson’s mother says she thinks it extravagant to make jam, because so much more is used than there would be if it had to be bought,” said Bertha.

“That is doubtless true,” I answered. “Still, if jam is judiciously used it saves other things, and so prevents expense in the long run. It *must* be judiciously used, though. If it is ‘run at,’ it is very expensive. It is in order to assist us in using it carefully that I have the jam put into such small jars and glasses.”

“I know,” said Bertha. “You think if a jar is once opened it is sure to get finished, and so it had better be a small jar than a large one. Mamma, I want to ask you a favour.”



“What is it, dear?”

“I want you to let me make the jam this year. I have not much idea how to set about it, because I have always been at school during the fruit season; but if you will tell me how to do it, I can learn.”

“And will you not require my valuable assistance?” said Frank, who had been sitting near us, reading intently as we thought, but who now suddenly joined in the conversation.

“Oh,” said Bertha, “you will do nothing but taste the fruit to find out if it has the proper flavour. Both mother and I know you of old.”

“I will do more than that for you,” said Frank. “I will taste the fruit, and pronounce an opinion about it, both before and after it has been boiled; and if there is any spoilt, I will engage to finish it myself without assistance.”

“That means that you think I shall succeed with the jam. Thank you, Frank, for the compliment. Mamma, do you agree?”

“Yes, dear, I agree very gladly. I shall be much pleased for you to know how to preserve fruit, and this knowledge you can only gain by experience; besides which, I shall be very glad to be spared the trouble of looking after it myself. I shall be in the house, so that you can come to me if there is any difficulty to which you feel yourself unequal; and I will give you

full directions about everything that I can think of that you need to know. What do you say to this?"

"I think it is quite right, mamma. Can I begin at once to do something towards it?"

"Yes, you can collect together everything you will require; have all put into proper order, and laid in a convenient place. First, there is the preserving-pan. Ours, as you know, is a large, broad, shallow pan, with a handle at each side. It must be made scrupulously clean and bright inside with sand. Eliza will do this for you. I know it is said by some persons that a brass pan is very objectionable; but still I have used this one for years, and have found it answer my purpose excellently."

"I expect," said Bertha, "the idea that a brass pan is dangerous was at first only a fanciful crotchet of some persons who had not got one."

"It is more than that. Carelessly used, a brass pan makes the fruit very unwholesome; and decidedly the best pan that can be used is an enamelled pan, on which the acid produces no effect, and which does not spoil the colour of the fruit as a block-tin pan would do. This enamelled pan, however, we have not got, and we must make the best of what we have. To do this we must have our brass pan thoroughly clean to begin with, we must have it cleaned afresh every time

it is emptied, and we must not let the fruit stand in it off the fire."

"So much for the pan," said Bertha. "Now, what else?"

"The jars and bottles must be collected. They were put away perfectly clean, so that they will only need to be rubbed till bright with a soft dry cloth. Every cracked jar must be rejected. I suppose you know that the jars must be perfectly dry, or the jam will not keep. You will find jars of both glass and earthenware in the glass cupboard. I like those made of glass the best, because we can see through them whether or not the jam is keeping properly. When earthenware is used, the jam needs to be opened and examined two or three times during the first two months. If it does not seem likely to keep, it must be boiled over again."

"Do you open every jar, mamma, two or three times to see if the jam is all right?"

"No, dear; I only open one of each kind. It has very seldom happened that I have had to boil the fruit again; but it is always best to look at it, and be sure it is right. Then you will need two wooden spoons. (Tin, iron, or pewter spoons must never be used; they would spoil both the colour and flavour of the fruit.) A fine hair-sieve, too, will be wanted, and you will find one in the cupboard which has been kept

exclusively for fruit. Then if you have two muslin strainers, a jelly-bag, a small jug for emptying out the fruit, and the scales and weights, I think you will be provided with tools for your work."

"I had no idea so many things were needed," said Bertha. In a moment she added, "Will you excuse me for a minute, mamma? I saw Ada Thompson pass the window, and she is coming here. Will you tell her how to preserve fruit as well as me, and will you let her help me in doing it? I know she would like to do so, and it would be so much more fun with her than it would be having it all to myself."

"Bertha likes so much to get 'fun' out of everything," said Frank, as his sister left the room.

"And a very good thing too," said I. "People never do anything so well as when they thoroughly enjoy doing it."

"I have told Ada about the pots and pans, mamma," said Bertha on her return. "Please go on."

"Very well. After the 'pots and pans,' as you call them, the next thing to be provided is the sugar. And here let me impress upon you the desirability of using well-refined sugar for jam. The difference in the immediate cost is very little, and is more than made up in the larger quantity of scum which inferior sugar throws up, compared to that which rises from

the best sugar. It is a mistake, too, to use other than the proper quantity of sugar required."

"I suppose, then, you always take a pound of sugar to a pound of fruit?" said Ada.

"No, indeed, I could not lay down any rule like that. The weight of the sugar necessarily varies with the nature and acidity of the fruit. If too little is used, the fruit will not keep. If too much is used, the flavour of the fruit will be lost. Sometimes, for economy's sake, people think they will use a small quantity of sugar; but they gain nothing by it; they only have to boil the fruit longer before it will stiffen."

"And so what they save boils away," said Bertha.

"I don't see why they should not take it off the fire a little sooner," said Ada. "It would not boil away if they did that."

"They would lose it more decidedly still, for it would not keep. Ordinary jam should never be taken off the fire until it will 'set,' or stiffen, when a small quantity is put upon a plate. It is scarcely possible, therefore, to say how long jam must be boiled; and when the attempt to do this is made, you should understand that the *probable* time only is meant; and the jam must be taken off earlier or boiled longer than the time specified, according to its condition. You must remember, too, that the time is always calculated

from the moment that the jam boils equally all over. But to return to the sugar."

"I thought the sugar was done with," said Bertha.

"There is not much more to be said about it. The sugar should not be in powder, because that would make the jam thick and turbid-looking; and it should not be in large lumps, because it would be so long in dissolving. It should be broken up into small pieces, and should be dried in the front of the fire before it is put with the fruit. Another most important thing to remember in boiling fruit with sugar is that the fruit should be put in first, and should be boiled gently alone till it breaks, then quickly for a short time till it is slightly reduced. The sugar should then be added, the scum removed, and the jam boiled and stirred gently till it is done enough. When this plan is adopted the flavour of the fruit is retained, and the colour of the jam is better than when fruit and sugar are put in together."

"Please wait a minute," said Ada. "I must tell you something. Last summer I spent a few weeks with a friend of mother's, who had married a German. You have heard me talk of Mrs. Diehl, Bertha. They were just going to boil some greengages, and Mrs. Diehl said, 'I shall have them done the German way.' Of course I said, 'What is that?' and she said, 'The fruit is picked and weighed, and the requisite quantity

of sugar taken. The sugar is then broken up into large lumps, and each lump is dipped quickly and separately into cold water, and then popped into the preserving-pan. Then it is put on to boil, and the syrup has to be watched for fear it boils over. It is stirred whenever it begins to rise, and simmered gently till it forms little beads. The fruit is then put in, and boiled for a sufficient time.'”

“What do you think of that plan, mamma?” said Bertha.

“I think it is excellent for choice delicate preserves, but for ordinary jams the old plan is the best.”

“Now for the fruit, mamma,” said Bertha.

“Yes, now for the fruit. It should be gathered in dry weather, and, if possible, when the dew is not upon it. It should be free from dust, and ripe, full-flavoured, and quite sound. All bruised and decayed fruit should be rejected.”

“Only the greengrocer can tell when the fruit was gathered,” said Ada.

“I don't suppose mamma would buy hers of the greengrocer,” said Bertha. “You would get it from the old gardener, would you not, mamma?”

“Yes; I have got it from him for several years, and I have always found he treats me very fairly.”

“And do you think it foolish to get it from a greengrocer?” said Ada.

“Oh, dear, no! I think nothing of the kind. When you have no knowledge of a convenient old gardener, and have no friends in the country, and live at some distance from a large market, what can you do but get fruit from the greengrocer? A quantity can generally be bought cheaply, especially if the fruit is ordered a little before it is wanted, and during settled fine weather. The only recommendation I can give you about buying fruit is, to keep your eyes open and use your common sense. Generally, jam is expensive or inexpensive according to the price of the fruit, and this varies so much in different localities, and from one season to another, that I can give you no established rule, excepting this—that unsound fruit gathered in damp weather would be dear at any price.”

“Once mamma got up at three o’clock, and went to the market in the town where she lived,” said Ada. “She bought a quantity of fruit very cheaply; but she said that she was so tired with the effort that she wished she had bought it in the regular way, and let the greengrocer have the penny or twopence a pound that she saved.”

“Very likely. To quote an old man I knew when I was a girl, ‘It takes a good many things to make up the “all things.”’ If you deal with honest people, and are content to pay a fair price for good sound fruit, you will not be very far wrong.”



“Now I think we know everything,” said Bertha ; “let us begin.”

“No, not quite everything yet, Bertha. I must tell you about the fire. We have no stove, you know, and must therefore make the best of our ordinary range. The fire must be bright and clear ; not too fierce, or it will burn the fruit ; not too gentle, or the fruit will be so long boiling. The pan must never be placed flat upon the fire, but either hung on a trivet or placed on the lowered bar. If it were put flat on the coals the fruit would be sure to burn.”

“Now, what fruit shall we boil ?” said Bertha. “Wait a moment, mamma. Ada, let us each take some paper and a pencil. We will choose the kind of jam we want to make. Mamma shall tell us the quantity of sugar required, and all about it, and we will put it down.”

“I beg to propose gooseberry jam,” said Frank.

“Very well ; it shall be first. The hairy red gooseberries are the best for preserving. Cut off the tops and tails, weigh the fruit, and for every four pounds of fruit allow three pounds of sugar. Boil the fruit till it is broken. Add the sugar, remove the scum, and boil the fruit again until the jam will set. A pint of red, or even black, currant juice put with every four pounds of gooseberries is a great improvement ; or a pint of raspberries may be put in instead.

The same directions may be followed for raspberries and strawberries, raspberries and red currants, strawberries and red currants, and in each case four pounds of fruit will require three pounds of sugar. The strawberries, raspberries, and red currants will not need to be boiled so long as the gooseberries before the sugar is added."

"I like strawberries preserved whole," said Ada.

"Ah! that is a delicate preserve, and wants care. Take equal weights of fruit and loaf sugar. Boil the sugar to syrup, as Ada's German friend recommended, and let it simmer gently until beads form on the surface. Put the fruit gently in, and add a pint of red-currant juice for each pound of fruit. Let all *boil* for five minutes, then lift the strawberries into jars, boil the syrup a few minutes longer, and pour it over them. Strawberries preserved in this way are delicious in flavour and of a good colour, but they will not keep for any length of time. When they are wanted to keep, say twelve months, it will be better to adopt the following plan:—Take a pint of red-currant juice and one pound and a half of loaf sugar to each pound of strawberries. Pick the fruit, which must not be *very* ripe, and put it in layers on a flat dish, with half the quantity of sugar in powder sprinkled over and about it. Let it remain for twenty-four hours, and shake the dish occasionally, that the sugar may touch the under

side of the fruit. Boil the red-currant juice with the remainder of the sugar till it forms a thin syrup. Put the strawberries gently into this, and simmer them very slowly for about twenty minutes, and remember to lift them out earlier if they seem likely to break. Put them carefully into jars, pour the juice over them, and when they are cold, cover them in the usual way."

"What is the usual way?" said Ada.

"Oh, you know that," said Bertha. "Lay brandied papers upon them, and paste paper over the jars to keep out the air."

"You may either paste papers over them," said I, "or lay papers upon them which have been dipped in white of egg or gum-water. The object is to keep out the air. I had some friends who lived in a damp country place, and they used to pour melted mutton fat over the brandied papers. Now, what is the next fruit required?"

"I should say red-currant jam," said Bertha.

"Before you say anything about red-currant jam, I should like to ask a question," said Ada. "How are you to get the red-currant juice for the strawberries and the gooseberries?"

"That is a very sensible question, Ada," said I. "Take very ripe currants, strip the stalks from them, put them into a jar and cover them closely. Set this jar in a saucepan three-parts filled with cold water; put

this on the fire, and let it simmer gently till the juice flows freely. Keep pouring it off as it exudes, and cover the jar again, until no more juice can be drawn out. The juice of all fruit is obtained in the same way.

“Now for the red-currant jam. This may be boiled in two ways. 1st. Pick the fruit and weigh it. Boil the fruit first, and stir it till the juice flows freely; add its weight in sugar, and stir and skim it till it will set. It will need to boil a quarter of an hour without the sugar, and three-quarters of an hour with it. 2nd. Take fine fruit fully ripe. Strip it from the stalks, weigh it, and add an equal weight of loaf sugar. Put them in the preserving-pan, stir unceasingly, and boil the jam quickly eight minutes from the time it boils equally all over. Turn it into jars and cover it.”

“Will that jam keep, mamma?” said Bertha.

“I don’t know whether you remember *Punch’s* recipe for making jam keep. It is, ‘Keep it out of the reach of children.’ I have never been able to follow that advice for any length of time, but I can testify that it will keep for twelve months. I have boiled red currants, and white currants too, for eighteen years in this way, and I always found that it would keep as long as the children would let it. Now, what next?”

“Rhubarb jam,” said Ada. “I should think that is cheap and wholesome enough.”

“It is a capital jam for family use, but it needs to be quickly used, for I never made any that would keep longer than five or six months. I have been told, however, within the last six weeks, that if rhubarb is stewed without water, and the juice that flows from it is poured off, and the pulp boiled afterwards with sugar, it will keep as well as other jam. I have never tried this, so I cannot answer for it. I have done it as follows:—Pare the rhubarb, cut it into thin slices, and weigh it. Boil it gently till it begins to soften, and stir it occasionally to keep it from burning. Half an ounce of bitter almonds and the finely-minced rind of half a lemon may be boiled with each pound and a quarter of fruit. Add the sugar (one pound for a pound and a quarter of fruit), and boil all gently together till the jam will set when a little is put upon a plate. If preferred, the almonds can be omitted, and the rhubarb may be boiled with the rind and juice of a lemon, or with candied peel.”

“Please don’t forget apple jam,” said Frank. “I think that is simply delicious.”

“We won’t forget apple jam, and we must not forget my favourite jam, blackberry and apple.”

“I never tasted that,” said Ada.

“No, I don’t think it is very common. For apple jam, choose apples that will fall easily, and weigh them after they are pared, cored, and thinly sliced. Put the

apples in a jar with the strained juice and grated rind of half a lemon to each pound of fruit. Set the jar in a kettle of boiling water, and keep it simmering gently till the apples are soft. Put the pulp into a preserving-pan with three pounds of sugar to four pounds of fruit. Stir the jam and skim it, and let it simmer for half an hour from the time it boils all over. For blackberry and apple jam, soften the apples in the same way, omitting the lemon juice and rind. Put them into a preserving-pan with an equal weight of blackberries, stir all gently till the blackberries fall, then add three pounds of sugar to four pounds of fruit, and boil till the jam will set. Last year I varied this, and put half a tea-cupful of water with each pound of fruit, and then allowed an equal weight of sugar."

"I liked it better that way," said Bertha. "Mamma, you must not forget black-currant jam. Remember coughs and colds, and horrors of that kind."

"Nor yet papa's favourite, plum jam," said I. "However, I think I have almost given you as many recipes as you children will manage this year. For black-currant jam, take the fruit when it is fully ripe, strip the stalks from it, and weigh it. Put it into a preserving-pan with half a tea-cupful of water to each pound of fruit. Let it boil for ten minutes, then add a pound of sugar for each pound of fruit, and stir the

jam to keep it from burning, till it will set when a little is put upon a plate. If preferred, the water can be omitted, and the jam boiled with three-quarters of a pound of sugar to each pound of fruit, but it will not then be so suitable for making black-currant tea. Black-currant jam must be watched and stirred carefully, because, owing to the thickness of the juice, it burns quickly. Speaking of the juice reminds me that I must tell you how to make red and black-currant or any other fruit jelly. Draw out the juice and strain it twice ; do not squeeze the bag. With each pint put a pound and a half of refined white sugar. When this is dissolved, pour the liquor into a preserving-pan, and boil it rather quickly, stirring and skimming it all the time, till it is quite clear. Pour it into jars, and when cold, cover it in the usual way. It will need to boil from thirty to forty minutes. As to plum jam, there are so many kinds that one recipe can scarcely be given for all. The quantity of sugar used must be regulated by the nature of the fruit. Some plums might be advantageously boiled in the way Ada's German friend recommends. For ordinary plums, allow three pounds of sugar to four pounds of fruit, weighed before it is stoned. Divide the plums into halves, take out the stones, and lay the fruit on a dish with the sugar sprinkled upon it. Let it lie for twenty-four hours ; then turn the whole into a pre-

serving-pan, and simmer all gently together for half an hour; then boil it quickly till it will set. Skim it carefully and stir it constantly, as it will quickly burn. Add one-eighth of the kernels, blanched, five minutes before the jam is taken from the fire."

"Should jam be covered over directly it is poured out?" said Ada.

"No; it is better to let it remain until the following day. To finish the jam neatly when you have made it, you should, after it is covered, paste a label on the front of each jar, on which should be clearly written the name of the jam, and the date of its manufacture. This would be a guide to you for future operations. Now, if you will put up your notes we will walk to the gardener's and buy the fruit."

As we walked along, Bertha said—

"Mamma, we will not keep the jam in the same closet that we did last year. I am quite sure it was damp."

"I think so too, Bertha. You may make jam perfectly, and your labour will be lost if you cannot keep it in a cool, dry place. If it is kept in a closet, the door should be opened frequently, that the air may blow upon the jars. If they are put in a hot place, the fruit will ferment; in a cold one, it will get mouldy. So we must remember that this is a very important point."



The fruit was bought, and the two girls commenced operations. They worked hard, were very happy over their work, and very successful. Ada came to me in great dismay the first day, out of breath, and almost in tears, for she said that Bertha had a large panful of fruit on the fire, and it was going to boil over, and they could not lift it off because it was so heavy, and the fruit splashed them so. I ran down quickly, but found that Eliza had come to the rescue before me. I advised them, for the future, on no account to put more fresh fruit into the pan than would two-thirds fill it, and with very juicy fruit, half fill it; and when they did this they had no more difficulty. When all was done, papa and Frank were called upon to taste the jam and pronounce an opinion upon it; but it was found that they needed to take such a goodly portion before they could pass judgment, that we were compelled to rescue it from them; and Bertha declared that, among her rules for keeping jam, she should record as the most important one, "Keep it out of the reach of the grown-ups."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## LOCAL DISHES, AND HOW THEY ARE MADE.

“WILL you not tell us what amuses you so much, Bertha?” said Frank, as he saw his sister laughing over her book.

“Yes, I must indeed,” said Bertha. “I am reading the account of that American minister that papa was telling us about. It is very interesting, and he is a very clever and original man. I was amused at the way in which he talks about oatmeal porridge.”

“Oatmeal porridge!” said Frank. “Is not that rather a queer subject for a minister to discourse about?”

“Perhaps it is,” said Bertha. “You see, this gentleman was not born in America. He went out there from some part of Yorkshire, and in his young days he used to eat porridge——”

“And I suppose ‘the light of other days’ illumined every basinful of that most excellent preparation that he came near,” said papa, joining in the conversation. “It is always so. I have been amused many times to see how people really appear to *love* dishes that are

peculiar to the part of the country from which they came. Again and again I have met with epicures and grave-looking people who were as particular as possible about what they ate, and if by any chance an uninviting-looking mess was brought to table which belonged to their 'ain countree,' their appetite and enthusiasm knew no bounds."

"It seems to me that local dishes generally are uninviting-looking messes," said Frank. "Nevertheless I like porridge. Whatever enthusiasm Bertha's friend indulged in about porridge was quite justified, in my opinion. What does he say, Bertha?"

"He has been telling some friends how to make porridge, and he says, 'Porridge is not mush. Mush was never heard of either in England or Scotland. In Yorkshire when we speak of porridge we say "they" are hot or cold, or good or bad. Porridge must be eaten, or, as we used to say, "supped," when they are freshly made. You can no more keep them good if you let them stand round to wait your leisure than you can keep champagne good in a platter. The true way to eat your porridge is to tumble in your milk while they are in the kettle, and stir it well in, then pour your porridge into basins, and eat them up. Don't set them on the table in one dish as the heathen do.'"

"Ah," said papa, "we need no one to tell us that

was written by a Yorkshireman. Of course he can tell how to make porridge properly."

"Yes, he puts half a tea-spoonful of salt into a quart of water and boils it. When it is boiling quickly he sifts a pint of oatmeal slowly into it with the left hand, and beats it quickly with the right hand. He lets it boil two or three minutes, and has it served at once."

"That is the only right way to make porridge," said Frank. "A basinful of that with milk and treacle would make a breakfast for a king."

"And, taken regularly, would make the king strong and robust, and able to do kingly work," said papa. "I wish all the poor, pale little children in our large towns could have a good plate of oatmeal porridge made in that way every morning. They would soon have a different look. See the Scotch, how hale and hearty they are. It is all because they eat porridge."

"Now, mamma," said Bertha, "what is to be done? We have got papa and Frank upon the subject of porridge. Frank has been educated up to as much enthusiasm about it as papa, and the two together are more than we can put up with. Shall you and I in self-defence fall into raptures about Devonshire junket?"

"Oh, I am listening very quietly," said I. "I will not speak against porridge, though, for I have learnt

to like it very much—and spice-cake and cheese too, and parkin. I think they are all excellent. Also I sympathise with Aunt Minnie in her admiration for a Cornish pasty, and squab pie, and saffron cake. I think Wiltshire puddings are delicious, and Gloucester puddings are delightful, and Welsh puddings are most superior, and that there is something wanting even to the roast beef of old England if it is not accompanied by Yorkshire pudding. I think Marlborough cakes, and Tunbridge cakes, and Shrewsbury cakes are very good indeed, that Banbury cakes and Richmond maids of honour are true friends to the doctor, that Norfolk and Suffolk dumplings are—satisfying, and that——”

“Oh, stop! stop! mamma,” said Bertha. “I didn’t know there was such a long list as that.”

“You must not stop me till I have mentioned what I consider the pearl of provincial dishes, and that is Devonshire cream. On a sultry summer’s day give me a dish of fresh ripe strawberries with plenty of Devonshire cream, and I will leave the oatmeal porridge to papa and Frank.”

“Ah, that is all very well,” said papa. “I could say, when my friends are gathered round the tea-table, when the lamp is lighted, when the urn hisses cheerily, when the jest and merry chat go round, give me, among the other good things which are sure to accompany

them, a pile of hot Wakefield tea-cakes, soaked in butter and melting with goodness, and I will never ask for the elegance of a London tea-table. Or on a cold frosty winter's night, just before Christmas, far away among the wilds of Yorkshire, when the members of the village choir are going round to the houses which lie perhaps a mile or two apart, singing 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night,' or 'Christians, awake,' or 'The first good joy that Mary had'—let me be the one to summon them in-doors to sit down to a table loaded with spice-cake and cheese and mulled ale, and see the smile on their faces, which shows their thorough appreciation of what is set before them, and I will leave Banbury cakes and maids of honour to Bertha."

"I am quite agreeable that you should leave everything that remains to me," said Bertha, "for all are good. Frank said he thought local dishes were generally uninviting-looking messes. I won't defend their appearance, but in themselves they are superlatively excellent. They must be so. They have approved themselves to one generation after another, and owe their long and honoured lives to the excellency of their constitutions."

"Well done, Bertha!" said Frank.

"Now," continued Bertha, "I should like mamma to teach me how to make all the dishes of this kind

that she can. Then when a friend comes to us from a certain district I will endeavour to set before him the 'food that his soul loves,' and at any rate he will not leave us thinking we are heathen, as my American friend thought those people were who did not understand oatmeal porridge."

"I know how to make a good many of these provincial dishes," said I, "and those I will tell you about with pleasure. I could not, however, teach you how to make Devonshire cream. For that you need milk taken from cows which have been pastured in the rich Devonshire country. As for Cornish pasties, they are easily understood, for they simply mean pasties made of almost everything that is eatable, with sometimes most incongruous mixtures of sweet and savoury ingredients. Fruit, meat, rice, eggs, vegetables—all are made into pasties."

"What are these celebrated pasties like, then?" said Frank.

"I can only describe to you what I have seen and tasted. When we were staying in Cornwall with Mrs. Archer, who was a notable housekeeper, it was quite a sight to see, every Saturday, the store of pasties she made. She would arrange the family dinners a week beforehand in this way:—'Sunday, there will be fresh meat; Monday, we will have a rice pasty [that was a pasty filled with boiled rice, sweetened and

mixed with currants]; Tuesday, meat pasty [a pasty made of little scraps of meat]; Wednesday, fresh meat again; Thursday, egg pasty; Friday, squab pie; Saturday, I shall make pastry again.' She would make fruit pasties, too, and leek pasties, and the children never seemed to tire of them. They were all kept in a dry closet, and were ready for all emergencies."

"What is squab pie like?" said Frank.

"And egg pasty?" said Bertha.

"Squab pie is made of mutton chops well seasoned, sliced apples, and sliced onions. A large dish is filled with layers of these articles, a good crust is laid over all, and the pie is baked until done enough. If you have never tasted it, I can tell you squab pie is very good. As to egg pasty, Mrs. Archer made hers in this way:—She rolled out a round piece of pastry about a quarter of an inch thick. On one half of this she put the egg, carefully turned out of the shell, so as not to break the yolk, and put little pieces of bacon all about it. Then she folded the pastry over and pinched the edges, and the pasty was ready for the oven. Among the country people there were leeky pasties, or pasties made of leeks, and 'tiddie' or 'tatie'—*i.e.*, potato—pasties."

"So much for Cornish pasties," said Bertha.  
"Now for the Devonshire junket that you are so fond



of, mamma. Devonshire milk is not indispensable for that, because we often have it."

"Devonshire milk is not indispensable, but pure, unadulterated, fresh milk *is* indispensable. Unfortunately it cannot be made with Swiss milk, which is so useful for many purposes. The easiest way of making a junket is as follows:—Buy a bottle of prepared rennet of the chemist. This may be had for 1s. or 1s. 6d., and will last ever so long. Put a quart of pure lukewarm milk into a pretty punch-bowl or something of that sort, which can be taken to table. Sweeten it, and stir into it a little brandy or a few drops of flavouring, and a dessert-spoonful of the rennet. Leave it in a cool place for about a couple of hours or more, and the junket will be ready for use. In Devonshire it would be sent to table with little lumps of clotted cream placed here and there upon it."

"Well, that is easily made," said Bertha. "Now the parkin."

"Yes," said papa, "the parkin. How I remember the delight with which, when I was a child, I hailed the approach of Guy Fawkes Day and parkin! I don't think even the jumping crackers would have seemed complete without parkin."

"There are ever so many ways of making parkin. I believe in country places it is often made by simply mixing oatmeal and treacle together with a little

ginger and milk, and baking the mixture in a slow oven. Grandmamma used to make hers in this way:—Rub  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of butter and  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of fresh lard into 2 lbs. of fine oatmeal, or flour and oatmeal mixed. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of ground ginger and  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of moist sugar, and a little minced candied peel if liked. Stir half a cupful of hot milk into a pint and three-quarters of good treacle, and heat the treacle a little as well, so that it may be more easily mixed with the meal. Beat all together to a stiff batter, and bake the parkin in a slow oven. It may either be baked in little buttered pans or in large dishes. It should be kept till wanted, carefully excluded from the air, in a tin box with a closely-fitting lid. I think parkin is most wholesome and excellent, especially for children. A cake of parkin and a cup of milk form a capital supper for any child.”

“That is not my kind of parkin,” said papa. “I like it made with Scotch oatmeal, and baked in cakes quite an inch and a half thick.”

“I like parkin well enough,” said Frank, “but I cannot say I ever cared for spice-cake with cheese.”

“You are not thoroughbred, Frank,” said papa.

“Spice-cake is nothing but currant-cake, after all,” said Bertha.

“It is currant-cake flavoured with spice, and real spice-cake is made with yeast. I think you will find

full directions for making it and all other local dishes in our cookery-book, Bertha, so I need not tell you them now. At the same time I think they are well worth your attention ; and, as you say, it would be a pleasant surprise to any friend who came to visit us, to be able to place on the table a dish which he could only regard as a compliment to himself."

"And what a comfort it would be to the hostess," said papa, "to reflect that, however fastidious the guest might be, there would be before him, besides the usual 'tableful of welcomes,' at least one 'dainty dish.'"

"You always make fun, papa," said Bertha, "but with all your teasing you will not keep me from studying local dishes."

## CHAPTER IX.

## HOW TO NURSE THE SICK.

EVER since Sir Walter Scott wrote his well-known lines on "Woman," men seem to think they have an authorised right to expect that all women will prove the "ministering angels" required when occasion calls for angelic ministration, and "pain and anguish wring the brow," and sad it is to say that oftener than not they are woefully disappointed. The best intentions and most kindly feeling may be present, but the requisite knowledge of the best thing to do, and the right way to do it, is absent, and in its place an astonishing prejudice frequently exists in favour of the worst thing possible.

There was a great outcry raised a little while ago, because a scientific man suggested the advisability of taking steps to hasten the departure of those whose recovery is considered hopeless. Public feeling rose at once, and rightly, against this, and so decidedly opposed it that the idea was suppressed almost as soon as it was given utterance to. It is, however, much to be feared that ignorant nurses do gradually and un-

consciously what clever men are not allowed to speak of, and that the return to health of numberless patients is either rendered hopeless or postponed indefinitely for want of proper and intelligent nursing.

Nevertheless, things are mending. Mrs. Gamp and her tribe are being slowly improved from the face of the civilised world, though it is more than probable that many a sufferer in obscure corners and country places will have to endure unspeakable horrors before they have quite taken their departure. There is still a wonderful amount of ignorance and carelessness about nursing, both among professed nurses and tolerably educated women ; and the sooner these can be removed, the better it will be for the sick, both amongst the poor and the rich.

It has been said that true nurses, like poets, are "born, not made," and there is a good deal of truth in this. One person will enter a sick-room and, though meaning kindly, will worry the patient and make him feel uneasy and unsettled ; and another will come in and very quietly, and without any fuss, bring an atmosphere of repose with her, and find out and do exactly what is wanted.

This gift of nursing lies a great deal in the power of putting oneself in the place of, and entering into the feelings of, another ; and repressed sympathy goes a long way in the sick-room. Indeed, to my mind one

of the principal qualifications of a good nurse consists in the fact that she has been ill herself, and knows what sickness is. Still, sympathy is not everything; and as the necessity arises at one time or another to almost every woman to minister to the need of those she loves when they are sick and weak, it is well worth while to find out in what the secret of good nursing lies, so that we may be ready to practise it when needed.

Good nursing, then, consists first in seeing that the proper remedies and medicines are administered, and afterwards in securing to the patient, without any trouble to himself, pure air, suitable nourishment, quiet, and warmth, together with perfect cleanliness about his person, his room, and his surroundings.

The remedies, the medicine, and the food vary indefinitely with the nature of the complaint, but it is desirable to say one word about the necessity of following closely the orders of the medical man, if one be in attendance. I suppose the very fact that the sick person has been given into the charge of the doctor proves that confidence is felt in his skill. If any cause should arise to doubt his competency to deal with the case, the best thing to do is to tell him so politely, either by word or by letter, and try other means; but as long as he is attending a patient, his advice ought to be closely followed. It seems as if

some persons thought that the visits of the doctor had a charm about them which might prove beneficial, but that the advice was merely mentioned in the course of conversation, and need not be thought about again. Others call him in to act as a sort of safeguard to prevent things going wrong, and then try all sorts of experiments on their own account. Both these courses are equally foolish as a matter of policy, and equally unjust to the doctor.

There is no one thing of which the majority of people, especially among the poor and ignorant, seem to have such a dread as of fresh air. They confound it with cold air, and, to use the language of one of them, they like "dirt and warmth." Take the case of a person suffering from bronchitis or inflammation of the lungs. It is no exaggeration to say that the efforts of ten women out of every dozen brought into contact with him would be vigorously directed to keeping as much fresh air as possible away from him. And yet the patient must breathe air of some kind, and it surely will be better for it to be pure than foul and impure. Of course draughts are bad, but fresh air does not necessarily consist either of draughts or of cold air. The thing to be aimed at is that the impure air should be let out of the room, and fresh pure air let in. What is to be avoided is a stream of air blowing *upon* the patient, and so making him feel chilly and cold.

The way in which this state of things is to be brought about varies with the position and structure of the house and room in which the patient is placed. It may be truly said that, excepting in damp and foggy weather, there are very few cases in which it is not safe to allow the window to remain open *at the top* for about an inch, or even two inches. This alone will do wonders in keeping the room from becoming close. When this is impossible, a ventilator should be introduced into the room. Putting a fire into it alters the atmosphere, and in complaints of the chest and throat it is an excellent plan to have a kettle full of boiling water throwing out its steam into the room, to keep the air from getting too dry. However it is done, it is of the utmost importance that the air should be kept pure. In six cases of illness out of every dozen, the attending feverishness and restlessness, and the relapses which follow each attempt to return to every-day life, are the consequence of the impure air which the patient has to breathe, rather than of the illness itself.

Whilst taking measures to prevent the room from getting close, however, it is most important to remember that the patient must at the same time be kept warm. This may be effected by means of a sufficiency of light and warm clothing being laid upon the bed, and when necessary putting a warm bottle to the feet. All sick people are more likely to be warm



in the afternoon and evening than in the morning; and they are never so likely to be chilly as in that hour just before daylight breaks, which is spoken of by old nurses as the "one in which the night dies."

It is scarcely necessary to say that nothing which would have a tendency to vitiate the atmosphere should be allowed to remain in the room a moment longer than is necessary. Any nurse who gives way to indolence or inattention on this point ought to lay down her work at once, and never take it up again. She does not possess in her constitution the qualities which go to make a good nurse.

There are a number of small wants and small annoyances experienced by all sick persons, which the nurse alone can look after and guard against; and it is the intelligent and kindly observance of these, or the ignorant or indolent neglect of them, which makes one difference between a good and an inefficient nurse. Some sick people like the furniture arranged in a particular way, or the medicine put in a certain place, and will become exceedingly annoyed if their wishes are not attended to and remembered.

A good nurse will neither forget these little things nor argue against them. Maybe they are in themselves immaterial, but they are for the time important to the one whose interests are bounded by a small space. You cannot argue a sick person into taking a sensible view

of things. Get him well, and then he will be as reasonable as ever he was: if you argue the case out now, you will very likely produce no other result than that of fixing the weakness in his mind, making him feverish, and giving him a bad night.

Whilst you are very careful not to give way to despondency and low spirits before him, be careful also not to be persistently and determinedly cheerful. It is exceedingly aggravating to a sick person who feels ill, and knows that he is ill, to have the nurse assuring him he is a great deal better, that this or that little symptom is only fancy, and to hear her telling the doctor that he has slept beautifully, when he has really been tossing about and longing for the morning, while the nurse herself has enjoyed uninterrupted and sonorous repose.

At the same time, carefully avoid the opposite extreme, and do not choose the very saddest subjects of conversation. The talk of some nurses is a perpetual dissertation on Mrs. Gamp's text, "We are born in a wale, and we live in a wale, and we must take the consequences of sech a situation."

I have a friend who told me that in one of her illnesses she was attended by a woman who kept on telling her of different instances of similar cases to her own which had ended fatally, and concluded each one by saying, with a deep sigh—

“But we must hope for the best, though we none of us know, with life being so uncertain.”

One day her husband came in suddenly, and found them both revelling in woe, weeping bitterly over the imaginary picture which the nurse had drawn of the mother being taken from her children, and the consequent grief of the survivors. The gentleman was so indignant that he sent the woman straight away, and would not allow her to come near the place again. My friend laughed heartily when she was telling me, and said that when she was strong she saw how ridiculous the whole thing was, but she could not fight against it at the time, and it made her feel terribly depressed.

I think most ladies who have been in a similar position, and who have not had a friend staying with them to take their place in the house, could testify to the anxiety they are compelled to go through with reference to the horrors that are going on down-stairs : how the butter is being used so extravagantly, and the children are being neglected whilst the nurse is gossiping with the grocer's young man. How much better it would be, when the mistress is quite unable to look after these things, not to let her know anything about them !

Do not allow yourself, or any one else, to stare at the patient. Some people come into a sick-room, and

fix their eyes upon the invalid, and contemplate him continuously and uninterruptedly, as if he were a curious work of art. I have seen this done again and again. The poor victim lies in bed quite helpless, but getting more and more uncomfortable; and the interested friend keeps up a close observation, until one does not know whether to feel amused or cross.

Be careful, too, not to bend over the patient any more than is necessary, and especially not to allow any one to sit upon the bed, or turn it into a table. This is an annoyance to be guarded against when friends are allowed to enter the sick-chamber. Two or three hours' discomfort may follow from a few minutes' thoughtlessness.

A nurse should be particularly clean in her own person and belongings, as well as in looking after the patient. No one who has not himself or herself had an experience of the two can tell what a difference it makes when the nurse is clean and tidy, and suitably dressed, or when the reverse is the case. A rustling dress and creaking or heavy boots must of course be avoided. She must be careful, too, to have everything which is used in the sick-room clean and bright. The glass or spoon in which the medicine is presented should be washed out every time it is used.

When preparing food, offer it in small quantities at a time, so as to tempt the invalid, and make him think

he could take more. Make it look as appetising as possible, serving it on clean napery, with bright crockery and silver, and do not consult the patient beforehand about what you are to bring up to him. The difference between a good and an inefficient nurse is shown in nothing so much as in the way they go to work about the food. An inefficient nurse will be talking about it all day, begging the invalid to say if he could not fancy this, that, and the other, suggesting various delicacies, and begging him above all things to speak if he wants anything, until he loathes the thought of the food before he sees it; or when, feeling faint, he asks for some refreshment, he finds there is nothing ready, and that it has to be prepared.

When, after long waiting, the food is brought, the favourable moment has passed, and it is sent down almost untasted, because "the invalid has no appetite"—rather because the nurse has no sense. The true nurse, on the contrary, observes her patient without seeming to do so, seizes the auspicious moment, and has ready some tempting little delicacy, skilfully prepared, which he gladly welcomes, when, if it had been the subject of conversation two or three hours before, he would have rejected it altogether.

This leads me to say that every nurse ought to be able to cook, especially small dainty dishes suitable for an invalid. She ought to know not only how to make

food look nice, but how to compress a large amount of nourishment into a small space. She should be careful, too, not to season her dishes too highly. Invalids are very soon "set against" anything; and a dish that is only agreeably flavoured for a person in health may be very distasteful to one who is sick. So much depends upon the food, that a true nurse ought to be quite independent of any assistance in preparing nourishment for her patient. I knew a clever but eccentric doctor who was about to engage a nurse to wait upon his own wife, and before he would enter into any conversation with her, made her go into the kitchen and prove that she could cook properly a mutton chop.

I must say one word about the means which are taken to procure quiet for a nervous person. Keep everything as still as possible, and do not let any one enter the room if you can prevent it, but let this be arranged away from the patient; and if any one does enter, avoid giving utterance to a low and stifled "Sh-sh-sh-sh!" When it is necessary to open the door, do it gently but quickly. A prolonged gentle noise will annoy a nervous person far more than a decided one, even though the latter be the louder of the two.

A feather dipped into sweet oil, and promptly applied to the lock the first time the creaking noise is heard, will prevent a good deal of discomfort in that direction.

With the remedies and medicines to be adminis-

tered, and the food required, I have nothing to do, as they vary with every complaint, and must be regulated by the directions of the medical man, and the circumstances of the case.

Miss Nightingale, that queen of nurses, whose admirable "Notes" ought to be in every home, speaks of good nursing as being in itself a most valuable remedy—and so it is. Many a patient has been lost for want of the care, attention, and "kitchen physic" of which our grandmothers thought so much. True, nursing the sick is weary work, calling for a greater exercise of good temper, forbearance, patience, and self-denial than almost any other duty. Still, when we remember that to all of us will come in all probability the weakness which will call for the display of these virtues in others, surely we shall not be found wanting when the opportunity comes to ourselves of "doing as we would be done by."

## CHAPTER X.

LITTLE ACCIDENTS, AND HOW TO DEAL  
WITH THEM.

EVERYBODY knows that "accidents will happen." All are liable to them, but all do not know how to deal with them, consequently the majority of folks become unnerved and excited when they occur, and instead of taking prompt and proper measures to remedy the mischief, aggravate it to such an extent that what might have been only a slight inconvenience becomes a great misfortune.

Accidents are very useful for one thing, they bring out character, and often where it is least expected. It will generally be found that when there is any sudden call for self-control and presence of mind, one person steps to the front and immediately assumes the position which is his or hers by right of the possession of those qualities. Those around simply obey their leader. Accidents are indeed a misfortune when they occur in the presence only of those who can do nothing but rush wildly about and add to the confusion which is to a certain extent unavoidable.



I believe, however, that this excitability, which cannot be sufficiently deprecated, arises in a great measure from the consciousness of ignorance ; and the knowledge that the best remedy was at hand, and could be used, would give calmness and resolution to those who would otherwise be agitated and unfit for anything. Acting on this belief, I propose to give a list of common, and what are considered trifling, accidents, and to state what I believe to be the best way of dealing with them.

The next best thing to preventing an accident is to be prepared for it. In every home there ought to be a place known to all the members of the household, but out of reach of the children, set apart for things which are likely to be wanted in case of accident. These should include a good pair of scissors, three or four large needles, ready threaded, some broad tape, a little lint, a roll of clean old linen, flannel, and calico, part of each of which should be torn into strips, some sticking-plaister, gold-beater's skin, turpentine, lunar caustic (nitrate of silver), tincture of arnica, and tincture of calendula. The possession of these articles will enable any one who can act with self-possession and nerve to deal promptly and wisely with most of the every-day accidents to which flesh is liable. These are, I think, included in the following list :—

*Cuts.*—Cuts require to be treated suitably accord-

ing to their position and their character. A cut finger is best tied up in rag with the blood ; for blood is very healing. If a cut has any foreign substance such as glass, gravel, or dirt in it, this should be removed by being bathed in lukewarm water before the rag is put on. If a cut is severe, the blood should be examined. If it is dark, and oozes slowly from the wound, it comes from a vein, and is not serious ; if it is bright scarlet, and spurts out of the cut like water from a fountain, it comes from an artery, and a doctor ought at once to be sent for. Until medical aid can be procured, the wound should be tightly bound, and the artery should be tightly pressed above the wound and nearer the heart. If the skin gapes from a cut, the edges should be at once brought to their proper position with calendula plaister. If in a little time it begins to throb, the plaister should be removed, and a rag moistened with calendulated water laid on the place. This calendulated water is most useful for wounds where the flesh is deeply cut or torn. If a little lint is soaked in it and put upon the wound, it will in nine cases out of ten prove most beneficial. It is made by mixing thirty drops of the pure tincture of calendula, which may be bought of any chemist, with half a tumblerful of water. A cut on the head requires great care. The hair should be cut all round the place, and lint dipped in calendulated water be laid upon it. As long as the

first dressing of a cut remains firm and gives no pain, it need not be touched.

*Burns and Scalds.*—The best remedy for burns and scalds is glycerine. A rag soaked in it should be laid upon the burn. If glycerine is not at hand, common kitchen whitening should be powdered and crumbled over the part till it forms a thick layer, then cotton wool placed over it. If either of these remedies be applied immediately to a slight burn, they will very speedily ease the pain, and most likely prevent the formation of a blister. If a blister should form, it should be pricked, and fresh whitening or glycerine laid upon the place. Next to whitening, flour is to be recommended. The part should be carefully excluded from the air, and kept as quiet as possible. The sore should be dressed every other day. Frequent handling will injure it. Supposing the clothes to catch fire, the individual in danger should at once throw himself on the floor and roll about. If people had presence of mind to do this, there would be very few deaths from burning. If he does not do it, his friends should throw him down and press upon him any mat or heavy woollen material that they can lay their hands upon. If only the atmospheric air is excluded, the flame will go out. The natural impulse is unfortunately to rush about calling for assistance, which perhaps arrives too late. A burn is more serious than a scald, and it

is more likely to prove dangerous on the chest and body than on the face or limbs. The danger to life lies not so much in its severity as in its extent.

*Bleeding of the Nose.*—This is seldom dangerous—indeed, it frequently proves beneficial, except in those cases where it is very excessive. To stop it, let the patient bathe his face and the back of his neck with cold water. If this is ineffectual, let him raise his face, lift his hands high above his head, rest them on the wall, and remain in this position for a few minutes. If after a little time the bleeding continues with unabated violence, procure medical aid as soon as possible.

*Choking.*—If a fish-bone or a portion of food sticks in the throat, and threatens to produce suffocation, first give a smart blow between the shoulders. This will most likely dislodge the substance. If the patient can make any attempt to swallow, put a large lump of butter in his mouth. This will help the offending substance to pass down the throat more easily. If he cannot swallow, put the finger as far down the throat as possible, and endeavour to pull the bone or meat out, or tickle the throat to produce immediate vomiting. Unless there is prompt action, life may be lost.

*Stings from Insects.*—After being stung by a wasp or a bee, the first thing to be done is to remove the sting. This may be done with a pair of small tweezers,

or the sides of the wound may be pressed with a small key, and so it may be squeezed out. Then apply to it immediately spirits of camphor, sal volatile, or turpentine, or failing these, rub it with a little common salt, or a little moist tobacco or snuff. If a wasp or a bee stings the throat, a little turpentine should immediately be swallowed. If the place swells very much, and looks inflamed, it should be bathed with arnica, or have a hot white bread poultice laid upon it. The arnica may be made by mixing twenty drops of the pure tincture with half a tumblerful of water.

*Foreign Substances in the Ear.*—If an insect gets into the ear, hold the head on one side, and fill the hole with oil. This will kill the intruder and cause it to float, when it may be removed. If a bead or a pea gets into the ear, hold the head down on the other side, so that the occupied ear is under, and give the other ear two or three sharp blows. If this fails, the ear should be syringed, but it should on no account be poked, as that is almost sure to do more harm than good.

*Foreign Substances in the Nose.*—Give a small pinch of snuff, and endeavour to make the patient sneeze. If this fails, put one finger above the substance, and gently press it to make it come down. At the same time put a small pair of tweezers into the nostril, and gently open it across. It may then be possible to

pass a bodkin or some similar article past the tweezers, and draw the substance out. If this fails, go to the surgeon.

*Foreign Substances in the Eye.*—Take hold of the eyelash, and draw the eyelid gently on the edge of the eye. If this is not effectual, close the eye, draw the eyelid away from it, and pass a bodkin or a little slip of paper across the inside of it, and thus bring the obnoxious matter to the corner, when it can be easily removed. If a little bit of iron gets into the eye, a strong magnet may draw it out. If a little piece of quick-lime enters it—which sometimes happens from standing near a building where lime is being slacked—not only must it be taken out instantly, but the eye must be washed inside and out with vinegar-and-water for half an hour after, or loss of sight may ensue.

## CHAPTER XI.

LITTLE ACCIDENTS (*continued*).

SWALLOWING COINS.—If the coin is swallowed, there is seldom any danger. The best thing to do is to take a light aperient, and in all probability it will pass away all right. If it enters the windpipe, medical aid should immediately be sought, and the only thing that could be done would be to seize the individual by the legs, and hold him upside down, and strike him violently on the back, when it may be coughed up.

*Crochet-needles, &c., in the Flesh.*—If possible, take the sufferer to a surgeon. With proper instruments he can take it out without much pain. If this is not possible, make certain which side the hook is; then put an ivory bodkin, or any similar article, down the wound till it touches the hook, and draw both out together.

*Swallowing Pieces of Broken Glass, Pins, &c.*—By no means take a purgative. Rather partake freely of suet pudding, or any solid farinaceous food, and it is possible that both may pass away together without injury being done.

*A Bite from a Mad Dog.*—Rub the point of a stick of lunar caustic (nitrate of silver) into the wound for fully eight seconds, and do this as soon as possible, for no time is to be lost. Of course it will be expected that the parts touched with the caustic will turn black. If, unfortunately, it should chance that any one is bitten by a dog that is said to be mad, it is worth while to chain the animal up, instead of shooting it instantly, for if it should turn out that it is not mad—and a false alarm is frequently raised—the relief to the minds of all concerned is indescribable.

*A Scratch from a Cat.*—A scratch from a cat is sometimes not only painful, but difficult to heal. When this is the case, the limb should be bathed with a hot fomentation of camomile and poppy-heads, and a hot bread-and-water poultice applied, to be renewed with the bathing every four hours.

*A Bite from a Venomous Snake.*—Suck the wound for several minutes. No danger need be apprehended from doing this, as venom of this sort does no harm when it passes into the stomach, but only when it gets into the blood. Of course the saliva need not be swallowed. Bathe the place copiously with hot water, to encourage bleeding, and tie a bandage tightly above the wound, between it and the heart. Procure medical aid as soon as possible.

*Black Eyes or Bruises, arising from a Fall or a*



*Knock.*—Rub a little butter on the place, or, better still, lay a rag dipped in arnica lotion, or equal parts of gin and water, upon it, and keep it wet. The arnica lotion may be made by mixing twenty drops of the pure tincture with water.

*Grazing of the Skin.*—If the skin is raised, wet it, and put it in its place. Cover it with the thin skin taken from the inside of an egg, a little gold-beaters' skin, a cobweb, or a piece of thin silk dipped in oil. Tie a piece of tape or ribbon round it, and leave it undisturbed for two or three days.

*Scald of the Throat, from Swallowing Boiling Water.*—This accident occurs not uncommonly amongst children left by themselves, and is very dangerous, as the throat swells, and the sufferer is in danger of being suffocated. Send for the medical man immediately. Meanwhile, if it can be procured, let the patient suck ice constantly, and apply a strong mustard poultice to the outside of the front of the throat.

*A Blow on the Head causing Unconsciousness.*—Lay the patient on his back, and dash cold water on his face; loosen his dress, particularly about the throat; let him have plenty of fresh air blowing upon him, and, in fact, treat him as if he had fainted. If on regaining consciousness he vomits, send for medical aid, as it is to be feared the brain is injured.

*Accidental Poisoning.*—When poison has been accidentally taken, medical aid should be instantly sought. As minutes may be of value, however, prompt measures may be adopted in those which must intervene until it arrives, and the following are recommended:—In poisoning from laudanum, opium, henbane, paregoric, soothing-syrup, syrup of poppies, bad fish, poisonous mushrooms, poisonous seeds or plants, or indeed almost any vegetable substance, the first thing to be done is to empty the stomach with an emetic. This may be made by mixing a table-spoonful or mustard or salt with a cupful of warm water, and repeating the dose until there is free vomiting. In all narcotic poison the person should on no account be allowed to go to sleep, or he may never wake. For all strong acids, such as oil of vitriol, muriatic, nitric, and oxalic acids, put an ounce of calcined magnesia into a pint of water, and take a wine-glassful every two minutes. If this is not attainable, dissolve half an ounce of soap in a pint of water, and give a wine-glassful every four minutes. Magnesia or chalk may be taken if lucifer matches are swallowed. For arsenic, which is found in rat and vermin poisons and ague-drops, empty the stomach by an emetic of ten grains of sulphate of zinc, if it can be had; if not, mustard and warm water. Give large quantities of milk and raw eggs, or failing these, flour and water,

both before and after the vomiting. For mercury in all its forms—corrosive sublimate, vermilion, red precipitate, calomel—the whites of twelve eggs should be beaten up in two pints of water, and a wine-glassful given every three minutes. If the patient vomits, all the better. If the eggs cannot immediately be obtained, use flour and water or milk. For prussic acid, which is often found in almond flavour, sal volatile and water and stimulants may be given.

*Drowning.*—Directions for the treatment of persons who have been drowned are to be found in use at all the Humane Society's stations. They are, in brief, to send for medical aid and blankets as soon as possible, but until they arrive to take at once instant measures for recovery, without waiting to remove the patient to a house, as delay may prove fatal. Lay the patient on his face, with one arm under his forehead, that any liquid may flow from his mouth. Wipe away froth from his throat and nostrils. Turn him on his side, and endeavour to excite inspiration by applying snuff, pepper, or smelling-salts; alternately rub his chest and face, to promote warmth, and throw hot and cold water upon them. If these measures are not successful, turn him gently, but completely, on one side, and a little beyond, then towards his face, and repeat these movements alternately, deliberately, and perseveringly fifteen times in a minute. Continue them for hours if

necessary, and meantime rub the limbs upwards firmly and energetically, and tear off the wet clothes, substituting blankets and warm coverings. This is all that can be immediately done.

*Sprains.*—If a sprain is nothing more than a sprain—that is, if no bones are broken or put out—wrap the part in several folds of flannel which has been wrung out of hot water, and cover it with a dry bandage, and rest it for some days, or even weeks. Entire rest at first and moderate rest afterwards is absolutely necessary after a sprain. If it is in the ankle, the foot should be raised as high as may be comfortable; if in the wrist, it should be carried in a sling.

## CHAPTER XII.

EVERY-DAY AILMENTS, AND HOW TO DEAL  
WITH THEM.

NEXT to knowing what to do in case of accident, it is useful to know how to deal with every-day ailments. To these all are liable ; and though they may be considered so trifling that they do not call for medical assistance, nor render it necessary that those suffering from them should cease from daily work, yet they diminish energy, and cause a large amount of untold, unpitied misery ; and, more than that, when neglected, often prepare the way for serious disorders. At the same time, if the mischief were dealt with wisely and promptly, it might again and again be brought to a timely because speedy end. I propose, therefore, to give a list of these ailments, and to say what I believe to be the best way of treating them.

*Cold in the Head.*—Foremost amongst the ills to which those are liable who inhabit this privileged island stands this foe to cheerfulness and peace. How can a man be cheerful and at ease when tears are streaming from his eyes, and he can only talk through

his nose? Once let him be thoroughly possessed by a cold in the head, and it is of no use his trying to be energetic, or dignified, or virtuous, or amiable, or beneficent : he will only fail utterly, and had better resign himself to gruel and blankets. It is my belief that when a cold has got into the system, there is nothing possible but endurance. It will have its time, and he is fortunate who can so deal with it that it shall not become more than a cold, and grow into bronchitis, inflammation of the lungs, or rheumatism. Nevertheless, the arrival of colds may be prevented, and their discomforts may be alleviated. They may be prevented to a very large extent by temperance, good living, warm clothing, and regular exercise, daily bathing in cold water, and the use of common sense. The morning cold bath is a most valuable preventive to a cold, for it renders the body less liable to the effect of sudden changes ; and I have myself met with several instances in which the proneness to take cold seemed to have been put an end to by a regular daily use of the cold bath. The way to prevent colds is to keep up the circulation by exercise, to avoid damp clothing, to wear good boots, to take plenty of wholesome food, and after getting either very warm or very cold, to bring the body slowly and gradually, instead of suddenly, to its proper warmth. Supposing a person gets very cold, the worst thing he could do would be to

draw up at once to the fire and take something warm. Far better to keep away from the heat till the cold feeling has passed off, and refrain from warm drinks for a considerable time. When it is necessary to face the elements in very bitter weather, it is a good thing to rub the nostrils with sweet oil, and then to breathe through the nose instead of the mouth. This is a very old-fashioned precaution, but one which is by no means to be despised.

Most people can tell the exact moment when they take a cold. A peculiar chilly, disagreeable feeling, more easily realised than described, gives the information. Now for immediate action. If possible, take a Turkish bath. If this cannot be had, take three or four drops of spirit of camphor on a piece of sugar every fifteen minutes, till five doses have been taken, and the cold will most likely take its place amongst the ills that might have been. If it still go on, drink a little warm tea or gruel, wrap up very well, and take a brisk walk until the skin is moist with perspiration ; then return home, and cool gradually. When bed-time comes, take a basin of gruel sweetened with treacle, and put an extra blanket on the bed. If these means are not successful, put the feet in mustard and hot water if practicable, take an aperient, a basin of gruel, a dose of nitre and sal volatile, and stay in bed an hour or two longer than usual, and so try to throw the

cold off by perspiring freely. Before dressing to get up, rub the body all over briskly and for two or three minutes with a coarse towel. If this plan is not feasible, dress warmly and bustle about, but on no account sit over the fire in a heated room and take hot drinks, for it will only increase the mischief. The discomfort arising from constant running at the nose may be relieved by putting a tea-spoonful of sal volatile into a jug of hot water, and inhaling the steam.

*Chilblains.*—Chilblains arise from defective circulation, and the best way to prevent them is to keep the feet and hands constantly warm, either by exercise or friction; and if they get cold, to warm them gradually and not suddenly. Amongst other remedies may be mentioned rubbing the part affected two or three times a day with a raw onion dipped in salt; with strong brine; or first with laudanum, and afterwards with a coarse towel; with a liniment made of two parts of camphorated spirit and one part of Goulard's Extract; with a liniment of one tea-spoonful of mother tincture of arnica and two table-spoonfuls of soap liniment; or with equal parts of spirits of turpentine and olive oil; or with an ointment made of an ounce of lard mixed with a tea-spoonful of mustard; or with a lotion made of a pennyworth of bluestone dissolved in a pint of boiling water. The best of these remedies, which are all good, is, I think, strong brine, such as



is used for pickling meat. When the chilblains are broken, and are very painful and inflamed, apply a bread-and-water or linseed-meal poultice, and renew it two or three times a day, and afterwards dip a rag in calendula lotion, and lay it on the part ; or melt a little mutton suet, and whilst it is warm, mix with it as much common kitchen whitening as will form a thick paste, and lay it on the part. When the chilblains are ulcerated, make an ointment by mixing equal parts of turpentine and honey, and adding as much flour as will form a thick paste. Spread a little of this on rag, and lay it on the sore. The intolerable itching which arises from unbroken chilblains may be relieved by putting the feet for five minutes in hot water, and then plunging them at once into cold water, or by rubbing the place till it tingles with a piece of flannel dipped in cayenne spirit.

*Coughs, Sore Throat, and Hoarseness.*—These symptoms are the result of constitutional disturbance, and when this is removed they will disappear. They arise from various causes, and when very severe call for medical treatment. It would obviously be impossible to give here directions for their cure, seeing that they differ so much in kind. Nevertheless, the following medicines will be found excellent for simple cases. The first is for children, the second for grown-up people :—

1. Take a table-spoonful of ipecacuanha, two table-spoonfuls of treacle, and two of water. Mix these together, put them into a bottle, and give a tea-spoonful when the cough is troublesome. When it is very tiresome, twenty-five drops of chlorodyne may be added to this mixture.

2. Take two ounces of Spanish liquorice, half a pound of moist sugar, the juice of two lemons, and a pint of water. Boil these very gently until the liquid is reduced to half, then add one ounce of paregoric. Give a dessert-spoonful when the cough is troublesome.

A little tickling cough that arises from cold may frequently be relieved by sucking potash lozenges, which may be bought at any chemist's for threepence or fourpence per ounce. A piece of new flannel worn round the throat for a few days will often cure a sore throat; and a wet compress renewed every five or six hours is a most valuable remedy for the same complaint. This compress consists of a piece of linen of three or four thicknesses which has been wrung out of cold water being put round the throat, and then covered entirely with three or four folds of flannel. Hoarseness amongst children should be carefully watched, as it may be the beginning of croup.

*Stye in the Eye.*—The formation of a stye may be frequently blighted if pulsatilla be taken as soon as it is felt—a drop every four hours. If after this the stye

is developed, it will neither be as painful nor as unsightly if this medicine has been taken. When the sty is formed, it should be bathed frequently with a lotion of rose-water and zinc, which may be bought of any chemist, and which will ease the pain and hasten the cure. When very painful, a parsley poultice—that is, parsley-leaves washed, boiled till quite soft, and laid in soft muslin—may be laid on the sty. Great care should be taken not to let the cold get into it after it is broken.

*Hysterics* arise from want of self-control, caused by debility or nervousness, or some physical or mental disturbance. By no means express any sympathy with the patient; indeed, speak to her rather sternly than otherwise; splash her face with cold water, loosen her dress, and put a salt-spoonful of salt into her mouth. On no account administer stimulants unless under medical advice.

*Toothache.*—The shortest way to cure toothache is to go to the dentist, and either have the tooth out or properly attended to. If the pain come on at a time when this cannot be done, strong spirits of camphor may be dropped on a little piece of wool, and put to the tooth, and this is almost sure to give temporary relief. Or make a little strong warm salt and water, put it into the mouth, hold it near the tooth, and in two or three minutes spit it out. Repeat this two or three times.

Or wash the mouth out with cold water two or three times. Or rub the gum and side of the face with oil of cloves. Toothache very often arises from indigestion, and an aperient dose will be the best cure. The best way to prevent it is to brush the teeth every night with a soft brush and a suitable dentifrice. If parents were careful to take their children to a clever dentist every three months during the time that the second teeth are coming, and have them examined and properly attended to, there would not be nearly so much toothache as there is.

*Headache.*—This complaint is the result rather than the cause of constitutional disturbance, and will disappear with returning health. There are several kinds of headache, which require treating differently according to their nature. The most usual headache, sick or bilious headache, often arises from neglect of diet and the laws of health. The common practice of flying at once to aperients cannot be sufficiently deprecated, as though these medicines may relieve for a time, they only confirm the disorder. The right thing is to study the diet, and take such food only as will suit the digestive powers, together with exercise, daily bathing, and regular hours. With young people it will generally be found that fruit freely partaken of will be the best of all medicines. There are numerous palliatives to headache. Amongst these may be mentioned a brisk

walk, a cup of strong coffee, bathing the temples with vinegar and cold water, putting the feet in hot water for ten or twelve minutes, sleep or perfect rest, brushing the hair vigorously, smelling strong salts, or scraped horse-radish, or eau de Cologne, or aromatic vinegar. The efficacy of these depends upon the cause of the complaint. If the bowels are regular in their action, if over-fatigue, excitement, and cold are avoided, headaches will not occur very frequently.

*Fainting.*—Lay the patient on his back on the floor without any pillow under his head, and splash cold water vigorously on his forehead, rub his hands and feet, and apply strong smelling-salts to his nostrils. As soon as he is able to swallow, give him a little wine or weak brandy-and-water. Open the window, keep the room cool, and do not let three or four people crowd round him. Those who are subject to fainting should be careful to keep the bowels regular, the mind free from excitement, to avoid unwholesome food, and to take exercise.

*Earache.*—Put a hot linseed-meal poultice upon the ear, renew it when required, and when it has done its work, put a little cotton wool into the hollow for fear of cold ; or, put into it a roasted onion, as hot as can be borne, and covered with muslin. If this fails to give relief, let the patient hold his head on one side, and drop into the ear a little warmed laudanum or bay-

leaf oil. If an offensive discharge follow pain in the ear, a medical man ought to be consulted.

*Bowel Complaint.*—This disorder may so soon become serious that it should not be trifled with. One of the best remedies that can be taken when it first commences is camphorated spirit, four drops on a lump of sugar every ten minutes. Unless it does good, however, it should shortly be discontinued. Keep the patient warm, and if severe pain is felt in the stomach, wring a flannel out of boiling water, put six or seven drops of turpentine on the surface, and lay it on the stomach. If the water is *quite* boiling, the turpentine will not smart nearly so much as if it were only warm. Avoid hot drinks, and give arrowroot, boiled milk, or barley-water to soothe the pain. It is a wise thing to have, especially in hot weather, a diarrhœa mixture always in the house. This may be obtained of any medical man or clever chemist, and may prove of great service in the dead of the night. Camphor ought always to be at hand, as it is useful for so many things.

*Croup.*—This terrible malady requires prompt and vigorous treatment, or it may speedily prove fatal. On this account no mother ought ever to be without ipecacuanha wine in the house. Directly the metallic cough peculiar to the complaint is heard, give the child a tea-spoonful every ten minutes till he vomits freely.

He is then safe until medical aid can be procured. He should be kept in a warm room two or three days, and the simple cough medicine recommended for a child should be given him. As ipecacuanha quickly deteriorates in quality, a fresh supply should be obtained every three months. As long as the wine is clear it is good ; when it is thick it is of no use.

*Ringworm.*—At the first sight of ringworm, paint the place and all round with iodine three times a day. This will very likely prevent it going any farther.

*Boils and Carbuncles.*—These tiresome and painful excrescences are usually caused by poverty of the blood and weakness, and those who suffer from them should have plenty of wholesome food, fresh air, and exercise. The best and gentlest way of treating them is to keep warm linseed-meal poultices on them till they have broken, and the core has been removed ; then lay a little soft linen rag on the sore. When the poultice cannot conveniently be applied, a little piece of sticking-plaster laid right over the boil, and renewed every two days, will keep it from being rubbed, and from being quite so sore. The old-fashioned soap-and-sugar plaster is very efficacious, but rather cruel. If the core of a boil is not removed, it is almost sure to come again. Carbuncles require medical treatment. They may be distinguished from boils by being larger and flatter, and having a surface composed of cells.

*Gumboil.*—Roast a fig, tear it in two, and lay the inside of one half upon the boil. It will act as a poultice. As gumboils are frequently caused by the presence of an abscess at the root of the fang, a visit to the dentist should follow their appearance.

*Constipation.*—Indigestion and constipation lie at the root of numberless ailments. Persevering and constant attention to the laws of health, to diet, to exercise, and to bathing will generally make everything right for a healthy person. Those who are unhealthy require medical treatment. The habitual use of aperient medicines is most injurious, and only serves in the end to aggravate the mischief. Dr. Johnson used to say that he would as soon think of consulting his portmanteau about what he was to put into it as his stomach. There are very few people now-a-days, however, who could make the same statement; and when once a man has waked up to the miserable consciousness that he possesses a liver, he finds that inattention to that important organ is surely and speedily punished. In addition to the all-important attention to diet, exercise, and bathing, the adoption of either of the following methods will be likely to produce regular action of the bowels:—

Rise early, and take an hour's brisk walk every morning before breakfast.

Drink a tumblerful of cold water the last thing at



night and the first thing in the morning. When the stomach will allow of it, the diet should include oatmeal porridge with treacle for breakfast, brown bread, green vegetables (particularly spinach), apples (baked and raw), stewed prunes, figs, and all preserved fruits.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## HOW I MANAGED MY SERVANTS.

“I HAVE inquired of all the tradespeople, Jack, and asked every one I know, and I cannot hear of a girl anywhere, and Eliza goes on Monday.”

“Let me see,” said Jack, “you have asked all the tradespeople?”

“Yes, and they almost laughed in my face.”

“Have you written to somebody in the country?”

“I don’t know anybody to whom I could write. I expect that people who get servants from the country have friends who engage them there, and send them up. Besides, Mrs. Harcourt told me that a country friend of hers said there used to be a good many servants to be had, but now-a-days there were so many inquiries for them that they were taken up directly.”

“Oh! Have you asked your friends?”

“Yes, and they all promised to look out for me, but I have not heard of one yet.”

“Have you been to the registry office?”

“Yes; I have paid half-a-crown at three different

places, and there the matter has ended. I don't see any advantage in paying an indefinite number of half-crowns, and not hearing of one servant."

"Nor I," said Jack. "Have you advertised?"

"No, I never thought of that."

"Why, that's the very thing. Put an advertisement in the paper, and I have no doubt you will soon hear of one. There must be plenty of servants to be had. Here, get me the pen and ink, and I will draw the advertisement up for you, and then put it in to-morrow. What are we to say?—

"'Wanted—a good general servant, honest, respectable, obliging, efficient, and cleanly. She must be a good plain cook, and able to wash and get up linen. A person accustomed to children preferred.'

"That's the sort of thing, I think."

"Oh, no, I am sure that will not do, Jack. The woman at the registry office said she had better not say anything about the children or the washing, or we should not have a single application. The best way was to give no particulars, but get them to apply, and then try and induce them to come. How will this do?—

"'Wanted—a general servant where another servant is kept. Liberal wages and a comfortable home for a respectable person. Apply,' &c., 'on Thursday, between 12 and 2.'"

“Very well,” said Jack ; “if you want vagueness, that is vague enough. Let us see what that will bring.”

I waited for Thursday morning with some anxiety. This was the first time I had had any difficulty about servants. Mother, I knew, had never had more than three in all her long married life, one of whom came to her when quite a child, and stayed until she married at the respectable age of thirty-five ; and when she heard that mother was ill and not likely to recover, she insisted upon leaving everything and coming to nurse her “best earthly friend ;” and I am sure that not one of my mother’s daughters mourned her loss more sincerely than Hannah. Hannah’s youngest sister had lived with me from the commencement of my married life until now, when she too was going to be married ; and my present difficulties arose from the necessity of finding some one to take her place.

Four applications were the result of my advertisement. The first was made by a young lady most elaborately dressed. On entering the room, she immediately took the initiative—inquired how many we were in family—what perquisites were allowed—what holidays were given. After hearing my replies, she considered a moment ; then, rising, she bowed gracefully—said, “Thank you ; I am sorry to have troubled you. I don’t think this is quite the sort of thing to suit me”—and politely withdrew.

The mind of the second applicant was entirely engrossed by the desire to make me acquainted with the bad qualities of her last mistress—"She was so mean, and so bad-tempered. I told her several times that I should have to leave her, and she kept asking me to forgive her, and saying she would try to do better; and the master he'd come into the kitchen, and he'd say, 'Emma,' he'd say, 'I know you've a deal to put up with,' he'd say, 'but never mind,' he'd say; and she cried bitterly, for at last I said, 'No, 'm,' I said, 'I can't put up with it no longer,' I said; 'you and me will have to part, 'm,' I said." As I displayed no eagerness to be the successor of this misguided lady, this long-suffering individual withdrew.

The third was a sad, depressed-looking girl, whose appearance interested me at once. She told me her parents were dead, and she had come up from the country to a situation, which she was leaving at the end of three weeks, her mistress refusing to give her a character.

"I'm afraid, ma'am, I am not clever; but if you would teach me I would try to learn," she said pitifully.

"But, my good girl, I want some one who can do the work, not who requires to be taught. However, I will take your name and address, and think about it, and let you know."

The fourth applicant was exactly the servant I wanted. Clean, tidy, and rather quick, she evidently knew what she was about and what she ought to expect. The lady with whom she had lived told me she understood her work and would do it. I had to make choice between the two. Jack told me I was to please myself, but no one in their senses would hesitate for a moment. With many misgivings, I sent the clever servant over to my friend, Mrs. Harcourt, and chose the inefficient one.

The remembrance of the first month we spent with that girl is like the remembrance of a nightmare. She was so willing that I never asked her to do anything but she rushed at it, and in rushing broke half the crockery of the establishment. Her idea of cleaning was to remove dust from one part of the house to another, and in tidying one room she would untidy three or four. She had no idea of punctuality, or method, or order; and yet she would work, work, work, from early morning till late at night, until I felt like a slave-driver. And then I had got her on my hands. I could not send her away, because she had no home to go to, and I could not conscientiously recommend her to any other situation. At last I made up my mind I would set to work and devote myself to teaching her. I began first thing in the morning, and kept on all day, showing her how to do

everything. Whatever she did badly I made her do over again. After repeated efforts I got her to put things into their proper places ; and when once she understood that there must be a place for everything and that everything must be in its place, the rest was comparatively easy. She seemed to wake up to it all at once ; and though I could not recommend any one else to make the experiment I did, yet for me the result was most satisfactory. That girl has been with me now four years, and has grown more efficient and more devoted with each year. The girl I had sent to my friend stayed with her eighteen months, then left to better herself ; but I do not think any amount of wages would tempt my household treasure to leave my service.

For my own part, I must say, if I were a girl of the present day I should not like to live as servant under the majority of mistresses. I should know that I was expected to render unceasing, untiring, and devoted service, and in return be suspected of numberless faults, and begrudged many reasonable comforts. What a miserable custom that is, for instance, that prevails in so many households of "allowancing" a servant—weighing her food out to her, and giving her so many ounces per week ! Why not be liberal, and take into consideration that servants working hard all day require far more food than we do, who sit sew-

ing, and take a very moderate amount of active exercise?

After many years' experience, my advice to those mistresses who keep one or two servants only would be: In inquiring the character of a servant, be very careful to ascertain that she is thoroughly honest. Tell her when you engage her that you understand she is so, and that you want her to assist you in preventing anything that in the least approaches to waste or extravagance. Let her see from your conduct that you have a regard to economy, and after that trust her. Do not lock up any household necessity from her, but make her entirely welcome to all she needs. With the majority of girls you will find at the end of a twelvemonth that you are not the loser. You may spend the greater part of your time in locking up, and if a girl is disposed to do it, she can outwit you. If, on the contrary, she is on your side, she can economise in many ways that you could not, and save you besides from the moral degradation of living in an atmosphere of watchfulness and suspicion of those about you. At the same time, keep your eyes open. If you find that you have unfortunately taken into your service a girl whose sense of honour does not answer to the trust reposed in her, far better send her away at once; you will never make anything of her. I am quite sure, however, that these girls are decidedly the exception.



When once you have secured a good servant, do not be backward in raising her wages without being asked to do so. Ten shillings given willingly and unasked is as much thought of as a pound or two would be which had been obtained after a struggle. If a girl does her duty, and stays with you, she is worth more wages at the end of twelve or eighteen months than she was when she first came, and she ought to have it.

A very vexed question between servants and their mistresses is that of "followers." I have heard ladies talk as if the height of moral depravity consisted in a girl having a follower. My good lady!—happy wife and happy mother!—did you ever have a follower? Did any one ever venture to make love to you? And did you not find it on the whole rather enjoyable? Think of that time, and do not be too hard upon your servant, who is only following your own most excellent example.

So much for what your servant has a right to expect from you. In return, you have certain work for her to do. Take care that that work is done properly and regularly; and if anything is missed or slipped, no matter how small, speak about it at once. No greater mistake can be made than to let a fault pass and say nothing about it, hoping things will be better next time. A right-minded girl likes to feel that a firm hand guides the domestic reins, and that if bad

work will surely be blamed, good work will as surely be appreciated and understood. And, again, never allow yourself to argue with a servant. A lady who does that loses her position at once. Let your wishes be reasonable, speak them quietly and firmly, and there let the matter end.

As the result of experience, I would say that unless this sort of feeling can be established between servants and their mistresses—a feeling of respect and regard on one side, and of sympathy and consideration on the other—we must expect that a very few years will work deplorable changes; and that whatever discomforts the ladies of the present day may have to endure, their daughters will have far worse. She will be a wise mother who endeavours to prepare her child for the trouble which may lie before her. If a girl be acquainted early with the details of household management—if her mind be filled with a sense of the dignity of labour, instead of the foolish scorn for it which, unfortunately, so many young ladies now possess—if she be taught that no work can be degrading which is done from a sense of duty, and in the service of those we love, she will be placed at once in a position independent of, and in sympathy with, her sisters in an inferior rank to her own, and will be in a great measure qualified to achieve a woman's noblest work—namely, to make the happiness of a happy home.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## HOW I MANAGED MY CHILDREN.

“OH, dear! who would be an old woman and live in a shoe, and have so many children she don’t know what to do?” said Mrs. Hendon—a friend upon whom I was calling one day. “There’s my Harry; I have worked so hard to get his suit finished, and just when he had got it on, and it looked so well, he fell backwards into a bowl of soapsuds, and it is quite spoilt. His stockings are always through at the knees, and his clothes are never fit to be seen——”

“In fact, he feels his life in every limb,” said I.

“In every limb—say rather in every fibre of his body. The child might be made of quicksilver——”

At this moment, the Master Harry in question rushed into the room. He was a fine little fellow, evidently brimful of animal spirits, but without the slightest regard to politeness or decorum, and with a dress which certainly showed no traces of his mother’s care and work. He took no notice of me, but fixing his eyes on the table, called out loudly, “I want some cake—I want some cake!”

“Do you see a lady is in the room, my darling?” said his mother; “why don’t you shake hands with her?”

“I want some cake,” persisted the young gentleman.

“Well, just a little piece then, dear;” and Master Harry disappeared.

In a few moments three other children broke into the apartment, all whining and grumbling, saying that Harry had some cake, and they wanted some. A slice was administered to each, and the mother shut the door upon the little tribe, telling them to go into the nursery and be good children. We had no sooner resumed our conversation, however, than one of the children returned, saying that Harry’s piece was larger than his, and he wanted some more. A little more was given to him, when the other children wanted the same. This Mrs. Hendon refused, when there arose a perfect hubbub of whining and grumbling, which brought down the nurse, who vainly entreated the children to be good. Mrs. Hendon at last lost all patience, and administered a sounding box on the ear to the least noisy of the delinquents, who happened to be the nearest to her, and this sent the rest flying up-stairs.

The mother resumed her seat, looking hot and uncomfortable. “I don’t know how it is,” she said

half-apologetically, "I never can get my children to behave properly before people. They are always the worst when any one is here. Sometimes I feel almost inclined to wish that I had no children—they are such a trouble."

"Oh, no! do not say so. After all, it is very true that children are the heritage of the Lord, and their presence, more than any other blessing, tends to make a home bright and happy."

"Ah! you may say so; it seems natural to your children to be polite and obliging."

"Indeed, I can assure you I have had a good deal of difficulty with them," I answered, as I rose to take my leave.

As I walked home, I began thinking over the many different families among my acquaintance where the children seemed to be, as Mrs. Hendon said, more of a trouble than anything else; and I could not but conclude that it was due in a great measure to the way in which they were brought up. In some houses they usurped all the parents' attention, and were the sole subject of conversation and interest: their every whim indulged, and every remark applauded, until they were almost unbearable; while in others they were left almost entirely to the charge of nursemaids, who might or might not be judicious and conscientious. Some children were forward, others rough and

boisterous, others affected and foolish, others greedy and grasping ; and I could only think of one or two instances where they were simple, unaffected, polite, obliging, and considerate for others. Then I thought of our own experience. When the hope of a family first came to me, I used to picture to myself how I would bring up my children, and seeing as I thought I did most clearly the mistakes other people made, I used to resolve that I would never fall into the same.

*My* children, I determined, should obey a look. They should always be tidy and neat, should behave beautifully both before strangers and in private, and so reflect credit on their admiring and devoted mother. They should begin at a very early age to go to bed awake, and should fall asleep instantly. As they grew in years, they should grow in politeness, amiability, and every other virtue, until, as men and women, they became useful and ornamental members of society, ascribing all their success and goodness to the excellence of the precepts which were taught to them, and the example which was held up to them in early life.

This was my dream ; but how very different was the reality ! I found, as so many young mothers have found, that it is much easier to criticise the conduct of other people than it is to act superlatively oneself.

“ I have been to see Mrs. Hendon, Jack.”

“Well, that is more than I shall do at present,” said Jack. “I don’t intend to go and see Hendon again until his wife has learnt to manage her children.”

“Oh, that will come in time. Remember our early troubles.”

“I don’t know,” said Jack. “Some people never seem to find out how to treat the young ones. I would not stand second to any one in loving and admiring children; but they want keeping in their places, and they should be taught to obey.”

And this, in my opinion, is the secret of making a child happy, and of finding happiness in a child. He or she must be taught to obey; and, in ordinary cases, this difficult lesson should be learnt before a child is two years and a half old. Jack and I have had *one* struggle with each of our children, and with us that struggle has never had to be repeated. The little one was given thoroughly to understand that his will must give way to ours; and when that was accomplished, the great work was done. Afterwards, the watchfulness necessary was chiefly over our own conduct. We tried never to allow ourselves to give any order that we did not see was obeyed; never to make any threat that was not carried into effect, nor any promise that was not fulfilled. It is marvellous how a child knows when a parent’s word can be relied on. I

know very well (no one better) how difficult it is for a mother to keep herself sufficiently up to the mark to see that her wishes are attended to. It seems so much easier, for the moment, to let things slide, and it entails so much difficulty afterwards. The trouble is really the greatest at the beginning; for if a child forms while young a habit of obedience, and if the younger ones see that the elder ones obey, comfort and happiness seem to follow, almost as a matter of course. There is no doubt that obedient, well-conducted children are by far the happiest. Once begin trying to give a child everything he wants, and the old story is soon repeated—he asks for the moon, or something equally inaccessible.

Our way of punishing small offences was to withdraw the permission to do little services for Jack or myself; and a very heavy punishment, indeed, was to send the child to bed before papa came home. This always caused terrible grief. Our rewards were books and toys, not impure sweets and vapid buns. It is such a pity to bring up a child to think that something to eat is to be the reward of virtue. Far better give him a pretty book, which will interest and amuse him when the sweets and buns have done their mischievous work. Mothers can do much to instil into their children's minds a love for books, which will be a blessing to them as long as they live.



We never allowed a child to be punished by any one but ourselves. I gave my servants to understand, when I engaged them, that instant dismissal would follow a blow given to any of the children. The necessity for making a rule like this may be known by any one who cares to watch the conduct of most respectable-looking nurse-maids to their young charges in any of our large towns. We ourselves never whipped a child for any less offence than deceit, or telling a lie. It seems to me such a wrong thing to be constantly boxing a child's ears, the punishment being oftener called forth by the parent's bad temper than by the child's offence. We tried to teach them, too, that they were not to expect to have a share in everything they saw. What was good for them they had without asking; what was not good for them would not be obtained by importunity.

Another plan which we found answer excellently was to give them little duties to perform—of course not anything at all arduous, but enough to make them feel themselves useful small members of society. Even a baby two years of age would put his little boots in their proper place, or get papa's slippers ready for him, and feel quite proud of the achievement.

And these plans were very successful. Even after making a due allowance for a parent's partiality, I

think I may say that ours were very good children. I do not mean to say that they were perfect. They did not speak in a whisper, or walk in a straight line, or look as if they had stepped out of a band-box, but they behaved like well-conducted children, and we did not desire any more. Young folks must shout and run about. The lungs have to be expanded, and the limbs strengthened; only they should do so at proper times, and in proper places—in the garden or the play-room, not in the drawing-room, or when in the company of grown-up people who wish to talk quietly.

This leads me to speak of their physical well-being. Our children were constitutionally healthy, though not robust; and I soon learned not to make them delicate by over-care. They were warmly clad, and well shod; they had plenty of plain, wholesome food, at regular hours; they were liberally bathed in cold water (excepting in severe weather, when the little ones had the chill just taken off); their rooms, though warm and free from draughts, were well ventilated; and then they took their chance. They went out every day when it was at all possible to do so. I took no pains to shield them from every breeze or every variation of temperature, and I think we were as free from coughs and colds as most people. During the first three or four years of our married life we had a good lengthy

doctor's bill every Christmas ; then we began to think we might just as well be without it, and certainly the change was as advantageous to the health of the children as it was to our pockets.

It is *not* good to be eternally dosing children with medicine. If they are not strong, let them have plenty of good air, good food, and good water ; and these, with judgment and care, will in nine cases out of ten bring them all right. If more is required, a little simple medicine taken in good time will very likely prevent greater mischief. When a woman has had three or four children, she ought to have acquired sufficient experience to act as doctor for her own family ; and she will soon be able to tell when they are only a little out of sorts, and when really ill. Of course, I am not now speaking of cases of severe illness, but of the little ailments to which every child is liable. As to the medicines : allopathic doses of homœopathy and homœopathic doses of allopathy amount to very much the same thing. I recommend every mother to procure a good Handy Guide to Domestic Medicine, of which there are many to be had, both allopathic and homœopathic ; by its help she may get through many small illnesses without calling in medical aid at all.

As our children grew older they grew stronger, and were unceasingly a comfort and a joy to us ;

and though I am thankful for my own part that their number was limited to six, yet we would not for the world have been without one of them. So far from sympathising with our American cousins in their horror of a family, a feeling I am sorry to see growing even in England, I am not ashamed to confess that I am sufficiently old-fashioned to feel that a woman has no more sacred "rights" than those enjoyed by a happy wife and mother.

## CHAPTER XV.

## WHY MY CHILDREN ARE HEALTHY.

“I THINK, mother,” said Jack, one fine spring morning, “you should go and see Mrs. Henderson. She is in great trouble with that delicate boy of hers. He has had another attack of inflammation of the lungs, and they have been watching the poor little fellow for several days, fearing that he would die.”

“Most certainly I will,” I answered, “and I will see if I cannot help her. But, Jack, Mrs. Henderson goes the wrong way to work. That boy has not a chance of being anything but delicate.”

“You think his mother coddles him? I am rather afraid she does. But who can say? The child is delicate, and that being the case, they cannot treat him as if he were robust and healthy. Our children are naturally strong; let us be thankful for that. We cannot tell how we should have done if they had been weakly.”

“I know what *I* should have done if they had been *only* weakly, and not positively diseased. I should have seen that they were well clothed and well shod,

that their little arms and legs and chests were thoroughly covered, that they were regularly bathed, and that they had plenty of plain, wholesome, nourishing food, and then I should have let them take their chance of the breezes blowing upon them. Indeed, I should have let them brave the weather, and take regular exercise in the open air; and unless there were something radically wrong in their constitutions, they would not have been weakly long."

"I think you are quite right," said Jack. "If I were you I should go and see Mrs. Henderson, and advise her a little. Perhaps you may get her to see things differently."

"More likely make her think that I am officious and interfering. Don't you remember that woman in the railway carriage that old nurse told us of?"

"No; what about her?"

"The last time nurse went to Worcester there was a woman in the carriage with a very delicate-looking little baby, whom she was feeding with a red herring. Nurse watched her for a little while, till she could bear it no longer; and then she said to her, as kindly as possible, 'Do you think it is wise to let your baby eat that herring?' The woman drew herself up, looked offended, and said, 'Thank you, you need not teach me what I am to give my children. If I don't know how to treat them, I ought to know. I've buried

eight.' An old gentleman in the corner, who was looking very indignantly at her, said, 'I think, madam, if you go on as you are doing, you will be able to say in a short time that you have buried nine.'"

I found things with Mrs. Henderson just as I had expected. The child was recovering, but looked pale and feeble, and the mother was nearly as ill as he was with anxiety and watchfulness. She seemed truly grateful when I offered to sit with the child while she rested, but declined my help, and said she could not leave him to others. She begged me, however, to sit a little while with her, as she wanted to speak with me. This of course I gladly did.

"I cannot think how it is," she said, "that our children are so delicate. I am sure it is not for want of care. We have had a very severe winter, it is true, but then they have not been out more than a dozen times, and then it was because the weather was a little milder than usual. I have been most careful not to let them go about the passages even, for fear of draughts. And yet I think they have good constitutions."

"I cannot but think they would be better if you were less careful for them," said I.

Mrs. Henderson looked slightly offended. "Do I understand," she said, "that you are one of those who advise that children should be sent out in all weathers to make them hardy?"

“I am one of those who believe that children and grown-up people cannot possibly be healthy and robust unless they take a proper amount of exercise.”

“And by taking exercise you mean letting them go out in all weathers alike—fog and rain and snow, blazing heat and bitter easterly wind?”

“You are rather over-stating the case,” I answered. “I would endeavour to avoid both coddling the children and exposing them unwisely. I would not send a child out when there was a bitter easterly wind, unless I was sure he was very strong, and could bear it. At the same time I would make an effort to send him out for a brisk walk for as many days during the year as I could.”

“How can children take regular open-air exercise in this dreadful climate?” said Mrs. Henderson.

“This climate is very much railed against, and with cause, but it possesses advantages. There are very few days, even during the severest winter, when a brisk walk is not a more enjoyable thing to a healthy person than sitting crouching over the fire would be. Of course the roads are dirty: thick boots are the remedy for that. The wind is bleak and piercing; health and warm clothing will make one almost impervious to it. The muscles need to be developed, the nerves strengthened, the chest expanded. How can these ends be attained by those who sit in a



warm room studying, writing, reading, and sewing all day long?"

"But surely you do not object to reading and study," said Mrs. Henderson. "I thought you were such an advocate of them."

"Indeed I do not. I consider a good education is of priceless value, and yet it is not so valuable that it is worth while to sacrifice health for it; and health cannot be enjoyed unless exercise is taken. I should be rather inclined to disagree with your definition of exercise, though."

"What was that?"

"You seem to think by exercise that I meant only constitutionals to be taken in season and out of season.

"And what else do you mean by it?"

"I mean by exercise the free, unrestrained use of every limb. If this can be done in the open air, so much the better; but if the weather is really so bad that a child cannot get out, he need not therefore be debarred from taking exercise. When my children were young, I have again and again put on their outdoor clothing, opened the nursery window wide, and let them hop, skip, and romp in-doors to their heart's content."

"But you do not think that was as good as going out?"

“No, I do not ; because I think that there is no exercise that can be compared with walking or running in the open air, and I am quite sure if it were practised regularly and constantly, there would not be so many delicate young people as there are. Only it ought not to be continued to produce excessive fatigue.”

“Your plan, at any rate, would suit the children themselves. How difficult it is to keep them quiet !”

“Because it is not intended that they should be always kept still. It is an instinct with a healthy child to love play. Do you not remember what Dr. Chevasse says?—‘I have seen silly parents trying to get their children to say that they liked school-time better than holiday-time ; that they liked work better than play. I have seen with joy many little fellows repudiating the odious and unnatural sentiment, and declaring manfully that they preferred cricket to Ovid. And if any boy ever tells you that he would rather learn his lessons than go into the playground, beware of that boy. Either his health is drooping, and he is becoming prematurely and unnaturally developed, or he is a little humbug. He is an impostor. He is seeking to obtain credit under false pretences. Depend upon it, unless it really be that he is a poor, spiritless little man, deficient in nerve and muscles, and unhealthily precocious in intellect, he has in him the elements of a sneak ; and he wants

nothing but time to ripen him into a pickpocket or a swindler.”

“But that is *play*; you would scarcely call *play exercise*.”

“Indeed I should, and very good exercise too, if it only brings all the limbs into use. There are several games which are most beneficial when played in moderation—such as throwing and catching a ball, trundling a hoop, playing at battledore and shuttlecock, or at horses, chevy chase, football, rowing, cricket.”

“No, no,” said Mrs. Henderson, “there you must draw the line. I know of one or two instances in which playing at cricket and rowing, practised by the young, have done incalculable mischief, and have laid the foundation of chronic ill-health in after-life. How can it be good for boys and young men to stand out in the blazing heat, as they do in cricket, until they are completely exhausted, to say nothing of their standing the chance of having their teeth knocked down their throats, and even of worse accidents than that happening to them?”

“Ah! you are condemning, and quite rightly, the abuse of the game. I am praising its use. In games, as in everything else, common sense ought to be the guide. Skipping, too, is most excellent, when the arms are thrown backwards instead of forwards, and

when it is not kept up long enough to produce fatigue. The best of skipping and of skating is that girls can take part in them, and they are far more limited than boys in their choice of active exercises. They can practise rowing, it is true, and singing is always open to them."

"Should you call singing exercise?" said Mrs. Henderson, in a surprised tone.

"I should call it exercise of the lungs only, of course; and I would not have any one sing who was afflicted with disease of the chest. But when this is absent, singing is a most healthful occupation. You very seldom, indeed, hear of public singers who die of consumption."

"I suppose not," said my friend thoughtfully. "Well, I must say that your range of activities is sufficiently elastic to render it possible for almost every one to take exercise in some shape or other. I can quite believe, too, that regular exercise must be salutary for the weakly as well as for the strong, and when once I get this dear child well, I will try your plan. Certainly I have not found my own answer very well."

"But remember," I interrupted, "that great judgment is called for in dealing with weakly persons, and avoid rashness as much as you would over-care. To my mind, if a healthy child is well clothed and well fed, he can brave almost any weather; but one who

has a tendency to inflammation of the lungs should be guarded from north-easterly winds. Also, no child, however strong, should be allowed to run about directly after a hearty meal, nor should he take a long walk or engage in any active work on an empty stomach, especially the first thing in the morning."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## CHILDREN'S PLEASURES.

“My dear children, you must go into the nursery and keep quiet. Don't you see I am busy, and cannot be disturbed?”

“But, mamma, we have nothing to do.”

“Nothing to do! Cannot nurse find you anything to do? Why do you come bothering me so?”

“Nurse says we're to be quiet, too, mamma.”

“Play with your toys; you have plenty.”

“We're tired of them.”

“It's a strange thing,” said Mrs. Johnson, turning to me, “my husband and I spend more money than any of our acquaintance in buying toys, and yet our children never seem contented. They are always wanting something fresh.”

“Perhaps they would value their treasures more if they had fewer of them,” said I. “I always think it is a great mistake to let children have many toys at once, because they only get tired of them, and break them; and I think also that simple ones please them quite as much, if not more than very elaborate ones. How-

ever, we cannot leave the little ones unhappy. May I go into the nursery after them?"

"Oh, yes, if you care to do so," said Mrs. Johnson, "and I am sure you are very kind; but it will be of no use. If you find them employment they will be tired of it in half an hour, and want something else. Nurse does not look after them as she ought to do," she continued, in an aggrieved tone.

"If the mother does not care to make their childhood bright and pleasant, it can scarcely be expected that a nurse will do it," I thought, though of course I did not express my thoughts; and I made my way into the nursery.

Things there seemed rather dismal. The room was bright and cheerful-looking, but the children appeared cross and dissatisfied. A tidy-looking nursemaid was sitting with them, and the floor was strewn with toys of all kinds, in various stages of dilapidation. As I entered I overheard nurse saying, "Why not build something pretty with your bricks?" which was answered by a simultaneous scornful chorus of—"Bricks!"

"Don't you like playing at bricks, then?" I asked. "I think it is great fun. I know some little boys who have fine games with bricks. They build two or three stations—say here, and here, and here—and then they make arches and railway bridges, and they put

one or two bricks upon each other for trains, and themselves pretend to be railway guards, and take up passengers. Then they need to be very careful, because sometimes the trains run into one another, which of course is very sad, and mischief is done that has to be repaired. How would you like to play at that game? Supposing we build a station here, and call it Bradford, and make you, Johnnie, station-master. Then we will put another here, and call it London: *you*, Lucy, shall be station-master."

"Girls are not station-masters," said Frank, who seemed to think his brother and sister were mollified with undignified haste.

"They are in this game," I replied. "You, Frank, had better be the guard, and accompany the down trains, and Herbert the guard to accompany the up trains. Now set to work and build the line."

The children began with great glee, and soon I stole away, leaving them enjoying themselves heartily, as was shown by the peals of laughter which were shortly heard.

"Well, have you satisfied them?" inquired Mrs. Johnson.

"Yes, I think they are happy for a little time, at any rate. Poor little mites! they only wanted an idea to start with, and once they have got that, they will work it out for themselves. Very young children can



seldom originate anything new, and if they do, their fancies ought to be carefully noted."

"Why?"

"Because it is such a guide for the parents, and shows them where the talent of the children lies. You seldom hear of a man making his mark in any particular branch who has not shown by his amusements in youth what is his natural taste."

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Johnson; "you seem to regard children's amusements and children's pleasures as quite solemn things."

"And quite right too," said Jack, my husband, who with Mr. Johnson entered the room at this moment. "I wish every one regarded them in that light. People often speak as if children's lives were full of brightness, free from care and anxiety, but I believe very often they are quite the reverse. The troubles of childhood seem very small to us, but they are very important to the little folks themselves, and it is worth while bestowing a little sympathy upon them."

"Oh, yes! indeed it is," said I. "There are sorrows enough in after-life. Childhood's days ought to be bright. 'He who makes a child's life happy is a co-worker with God.'"

"That is all very well," observed Mr. Johnson, "but children differ so. Now take ours. I think I may say honestly that we spare no expense to make our

children happy. They have a pleasant playground, a comfortable nursery, interesting picture-books, and most expensive toys; and yet their mother tells me that they are continually wanting something they have not got."

"I certainly do not believe," said Jack, "that those children are necessarily the happiest who are the richest in toys. Look at the little dirty youngsters in the street. They get far more enjoyment out of the manufacture of dirt-pies by the side of the road than their more fortunate brothers and sisters get out of costly playthings. It is with children as with grown-up people; happiness is more a question of disposition than of surroundings."

"I think, when trying to give children pleasure and make them happy," said I, "one is apt to forget how *little* delights them."

"I believe," remarked Mrs. Johnson, "that what delights them more than anything is to break the furniture and tear their clothes."

"Oh, no! they are not often wilfully mischievous. They 'feel their life in every limb,' and *cannot* always be still. Most healthy children prefer games full of action—even rough games if you like; and it is much better that they should do so. Healthy romping saves many a doctor's bill. Parents ought to be very careful how they repress the spirits of their little ones too

hastily, and should try not to be continually saying, 'Hush, hush! be still!'

"When it can be managed," said Jack, "it is a splendid thing to give them a room all to themselves, in the attics if possible, far away from the haunts of the family, where they can shout, and jump, and run to their heart's content. But of course this is not always practicable. At the same time, I must say I should put danger out of their way as much as possible, and I should not choose a room with an open fire or a window that opened upon the leads for their delectation."

"No, I should think not," remarked Mrs. Johnson. "Fancy my Johnnie under such circumstances! I almost tremble to think of it."

"There is one way now-a-days in which children are very badly and injudiciously treated, in my opinion," said Jack, "and that is in trying to cheat them as it were into getting knowledge, under the guise of pleasure. How many books there are that commence in a most interesting way, and in a very short time the juvenile reader finds himself lightly introduced to one of the abstruse sciences! I do call that too bad. That kind of thing does more harm than good, because there is no royal road to learning. Knowledge can only be acquired by patient study, and the attempt to entrap boys and girls into catching some of it in this

way only tends to disgust them with books, which is a great mistake. The very boys and girls who will read these kind of books are unfortunately the ones who ought not to do so, for they are most likely the quiet, studious children, who want to be taken from study, not drawn into it."

"Then do you not believe in what is called combining instruction with amusement?" said Mr. Johnson.

"I should not feel inclined to say that I did not believe in it at all, but I am sure it requires to be done most judiciously and with great discrimination, or it is most useless. A wise teacher can sometimes impart knowledge to a child almost without his being conscious of it, in the course of a ramble through the woods or by the sea-shore; or even if he does not supply actual scientific facts, he can do what is far more important, he can awaken habits of observation and reflection which, if only they can be once roused, never slumber again. There is no need to buy toys, though, in order to amuse children. We have a clever little friend who can interest our youngsters for hours; telling them stories, and illustrating her tale as she goes on by cutting out in writing-paper chairs, tables, footstools, old ladies, gallant gentlemen, umbrellas, walking-sticks, rampant bulls, fiery steeds, and peaceful pussy-cats. Another — a gentleman — will make out of orange-peel valuable shorthorns and

gentle baa-lambs ; and with no other materials than two or three sheets of paper will fabricate boats, barges, windmills, cocked hats, bellows, looking-glasses, bread-baskets, cocks and hens, and numberless articles."

"That is what I like so much in the Kindergarten system of education for little ones," said I. "The teachers aim at awakening the faculties rather than cramming the children's memories with detail. Have you ever realised what an achievement it is for a child to learn to read and write ? It seems almost as if that ought not to be attempted with quite a young child. These teachers do not make the attempt. They endeavour to bring a child's powers into play, and act in such a way that if there are any talents hidden under the curly pates, they are likely to show themselves."

"Ah!" observed Mrs. Johnson, "you talk about the difficulty of learning to read and write : what is it for a girl to learn to sew ? Of course, I agree with all superior people in thinking that it is most important a girl should be taught this most useful domestic art. But surely it need not be made a bugbear ; and now-a-days it is either left alone altogether, or made most unpleasant. I always think of that part of my own education with horror. I had a most excellent aunt, Mary Anne, who considered that my mother did not sufficiently look after me in this respect ; and, in order to make up for her deficiencies, used to invite me to

spend the day with her, and on each occasion a long seam was brought out, and a length marked, which I was ordered to finish before I left off. Again and again I rebelled, and then I was held up as a shocking example to my cousins, who sat in their places, sewing with deft fingers, and looking pictures of virtue. Oh, dear!" she continued, laughing; "my hands used to get so hot; and the needles would stick, and the seam went into very deep mourning before it was finished, and the stitches looked so large! I believe, if that state of things had continued, I should never have liked needlework."

"But you sew so well now, and seem to like it so much. How is that?"

"It happened that another aunt came to pay us a visit, and she found out the mischief that was being done, and interposed on my behalf. She discarded the hateful seam altogether, and in place of it gave me a large doll, which would be so lovely when it was dressed, and she promised to help me if I would try to dress it; and, although I was rather suspicious at first, I soon began to take an interest in my work, and in a little time grew quite fond of it."

"Ah! your second aunt was a wise woman. But what strange ideas some people have!" said Jack. "I know one lady—a most sensible, excellent woman, in many respects—who makes it a boast that she never

allowed her girls to waste their time over books. The consequence is, her daughters, with good average abilities, have no taste whatever for reading, and unfortunately cannot acquire it now, I fear ; for I do not think it is possible for any one to gain such a liking except in early life. The art of sewing may be learnt, but not the love of reading. Another most conscientious, well-meaning mother never allows her children to read fairy tales, or any works of fiction, and so represses, as far as she can, all imagination in her children, which is a terrible calamity. The most peculiar educational fancy that I know of, however, is one which possesses an acquaintance of my wife's. This lady thinks that life is so full of sadness that the best thing that she can do for her children is to accustom them to disappointment. Consequently, she promises them little treats, and at the last moment revokes her promise ; takes tickets for the pantomime, and, when the children are ready for setting out, sends them off to bed, and so on."

"What a horrible woman !" said Mrs. Johnson. "I should think she is doing her children an amount of harm, in leading them to doubt her truthfulness."

"I don't think, so far, the result of her teaching has been very satisfactory. The children are bitter and cynical, and they are almost always in tears, and seem to regard disappointment quite as a matter of course."

Well-meaning people make blunders at times, and there are plenty of quicksands to avoid, even in such a seemingly simple thing as trying to make children happy. If you indulge them too much, pleasures pall on them, and they grow exacting and selfish. If they are kept too strictly, they become envious and discontented. In this, as in most other things, the path of wisdom lies between the two extremes; and whilst it may safely be asserted that no children should be kept without pleasures, their amount and character must be left to the judicious parent, who has studied the character and disposition of the child.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## HOW TO GIVE A CHILDREN'S PARTY.

“THE children are going to a party.” I hope there are not many mothers and not many children, in the homes where these papers are read, who do not understand the meaning of this phrase. The young ones look forward to the treat for days before, with that ecstatic anticipation of coming joy which is felt only by the young. When the day dawns the hours seem as if they would never drag their weary length along, for it is felt to be worse than useless to attempt any ordinary employment or amusement. And when the party is over, what delight there is in talking about it! How kind every one was, what fun they had, and how quickly it was time to come home!

But it is by no means an easy thing to give a successful children's party. It is easy to fill the rooms with eager children, and to spread before them unusual and rich food, but the result of this is oftener than not weariness, fatigue, and dissatisfaction to the grown-up people, and discontent, disappointment, and even illness to the children. What can be more ridiculous

than to collect together a crowd of children, of all ages and dispositions, to exchange for five or six hours their well-ventilated nurseries for heated rooms and draughty passages ; their simple food for indigestible pastry and sickly, unwholesome sweets ; their ordinary warm clothing for low-necked sleeveless dresses, which leave exposed that most sensitive part of the human frame, the upper part of the arms and the chest ; and then to allow them to sit up for two or three hours beyond their usual time for retiring, until the fashionable hour arrives for children's parties to break up, when, worn out with fatigue and excitement, the little ones are carried off to bed ?

This is not the sort of thing I mean by a well-conducted children's party, and fortunately a great many sensible parents see the evils of which I have spoken, and set their faces against them. At the same time it is by no means necessary for those who wish to give pleasure to their children without harming them either morally or physically, to debar them altogether from attending gatherings of the kind ; and common-sense people, of whom there are a great many in the world, would confer a benefit on their friends and acquaintance if they would show them by their example how these pleasant little réunions can be managed in a common-sense way.

For one thing, it is very important not to invite a

larger number of children than the size of the rooms will comfortably accommodate. This mistake is frequently made, and it is a very unfortunate one. It oftener than not arises from the desire of the hostess to pay off her visiting debts all at once, and so she asks every child whose parents she wishes to compliment, and the consequence is that there is no enjoyment; the rooms are unpleasantly crowded, and filled with children who have no sympathy with one another, who have not even room to make acquaintance, and so become cross and bad-tempered, and ten to one ill-behaved.

It is a great mistake, too, to ask a number of very young children to parties. After sunset the little ones are best in bed. Every one knows they are invited with the object of pleasing their mothers, but sensible mothers would take a greater pleasure in seeing them warmly tucked up in their soft little cots than in having them ever so much admired at unseasonable times.

The hours for meeting and parting must necessarily vary with the habits of the children; for even children's habits vary, and no hard and fast line could possibly be drawn. Nevertheless the custom, which is unfortunately too common, of keeping up children's parties until a late hour cannot be sufficiently deprecated. The only effect of it is that the children are upset in

health and temper. They do not enjoy themselves any more than they would do if they met early and retired early ; and they are unfitted the next day for both work and play. This practice has done more than anything else to make prudent parents object to children's parties.

It is of no use to expect that when the children have arrived they will amuse themselves. They will not. If left to do so, the boys will gradually collect in one part of the room, and, I am afraid, will sometimes conduct themselves rather roughly ; and the girls will sit modestly and silently in another part, scarcely speaking a word. It needs a grown-up person possessed of both energy and kindness, and who has made up his or her mind that hard work will be required, both to begin the enjoyment and to keep it up. It is the best thing to draw up a programme beforehand, and to have all the details arranged ; and it requires forethought and care to see that there is no hitch in them. Of course the most delightful plan is to have a special entertainment provided for the children—a conjurer to puzzle them, or a show of some kind for them to watch. It is not every one, however, who can afford to pay a professional person to undertake the management of it ; and it must be properly carried out, or it is worse than nothing. What can be more wearisome than to sit in a darkened room watching an inex-

perienced amateur try to exhibit a magic lantern? An oily smell, suggestive of headache, fills the apartment ; the spectators are anxiously waiting for the sight, when a black figure is seen to rush through the darkness, to seek somewhere for something which has been forgotten, and which is not found, and for want of which the pictures look like nothing but an illuminated haze, indistinct and unsatisfactory. The politer members of the company do their best to admire, but at the same time feel immensely relieved when the impracticable machine is removed, and an ordinary round game is called for.

Of late years Christmas-trees have become very popular at children's parties. They are exceedingly pretty, and when tastefully trimmed with glittering ornaments, and lighted up with small lamps or candles, have a very charming appearance. When more than this is attempted, however, I think they are a mistake. Ticketed presents for the children are often hung upon the tree, and corresponding tickets drawn for. I have scarcely ever known this plan successful. In nine cases out of ten the boys get the dolls, and the girls the cricket-balls ; and one difference between children and grown-up people is that the former find more difficulty in hiding their feelings than the latter. The kind host and hostess give themselves a great deal of trouble, and put themselves to expense,

and after all only succeed in making their guests discontented and dissatisfied.

If it is wished to make presents to the children, why not have a bran-pie?—that is, a large box filled with bran, in which is hidden a present specially designed for each child, and marked with his name, and which is sought for by the youngest guest present. Or let one of the grown-up people dress like an old man, and come in laden with the treasures. All sorts of similar plans might be adopted, but it is not well to leave the distribution of the presents to chance.

One of the most successful parties that my children ever attended was given by a clever and rather eccentric friend of mine. In issuing her invitations, she requested that the children might arrive not later than three, and be sent for not later than eight o'clock. When they arrived, they were shown into a large, comfortable room, and the hostess and a lady friend joined with them in playing at old-fashioned round games, which were continued after tea. About half-past seven the children were taken into another room, and invited to seat themselves round a large table. In the middle of this was a Christmas-tree prettily lighted and tastefully decorated. A plate was set for each child, upon which was an orange, a piece of cake, and a few raisins, and by the side of the plate a small parcel containing a present. Upon the parcel was placed a

doll's candlestick, holding a small wax taper, lighted. The children examined their presents and partook of their refreshment by the light only of the candles and the Christmas-tree, and their delight was unbounded.

There is one word that must be said to parents in speaking of children's parties. When children receive an invitation to a party, the object of those who give it can only be either to give pleasure to the children, or to compliment the parents. In return for this they have a right to expect that they shall be treated fairly. This cannot be said to be the case if the children when they leave home are not perfectly well. So many of the complaints peculiar to children are spread by carelessness of this kind; and what can be more annoying to a host and hostess than to find that their house has been the centre from which illness has spread to their friends?

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## HOW TO MAKE CHILDREN'S TOYS.

“BE good children, and play nicely.” “But we don't know what to play at; we have nothing to do.” How often do these remarks pass between children and nurses!

The majority of children are good when they are interested and fully employed. Does not every mother know that when she gathers her children round her and tells them a story, or when nurse devotes herself exclusively to their amusement, there are no complaints made that Master Tommy gets into mischief and tears his clothes, or that Miss Ethel quarrels with her sisters? Tommy stands with mouth and eyes wide open, listening to the story with all the attention of which he is capable, and Ethel amiably gives up her comfortable seat that baby may sit near mother.

The difficulty is that mother cannot always be telling stories, for she and nurse also have numberless duties to attend to. Still, the little limbs are active, the little eyes are bright and searching, the minds are



busy ; and if the children cannot be provided with legitimate materials on which to expend their energies, they will assuredly find illegitimate ones. Is it not worth while to take a little pains to keep them fully occupied, and without burdening them to accustom them to pass from one employment to another ?

I do not think that children need to be provided with a large number of toys. The children who are the richest in toys are not necessarily the happiest. It is with them as with grown-up people—what is easily obtained is lightly valued. It is pitiable to enter some nurseries, and to see the toys once beautiful which now lie broken and useless. Neither is it necessary to go to any very great expense. Supposing a little girl has succeeded in herself manufacturing a rag doll, she will value it far more than a much superior one which has been bought at a shop ; whilst nothing interests a boy more than the boat or the bow and arrow which he has made with his own deft little fingers.

Fröbel, the founder of the Kindergarten system of education, believed that “play is the labour of the child.” In his opinion, a child’s employments and games should not only call his fingers into exercise, but should draw out his powers of observation, and reason, and comparison, and memory. Certainly this is most desirable and excellent ; but what are these interesting employments ? It may prove useful to

name one or two of them. One of the simplest is stick-work. This is for quite young children. For this it is necessary to have a number of pieces of wood about the eighth of an inch thick and three inches long. These sticks may be bought in boxes ready for use, and at a cost of threepence or fourpence; or a bundle of flat spills may be obtained and cut up to the required size. With these a child will amuse himself for a long time. The nurse should direct him either to make letters or to form figures.

For children of a more advanced age pea-work is very interesting. Sticks are necessary for this also, but they should be round instead of flat, and should be pointed at each end. They can be bought for a few pence rounded properly, and of a good length, but they will need to be broken into short pieces of a suitable size, and to be pointed at the ends. The day before they are to be used, about a pint of dried peas should be procured, and these should be soaked in plenty of cold water to soften them. They should then be dried with a soft cloth, otherwise they will spoil the points of the sticks, then they are ready for use. It is astonishing what a number of pretty figures can be made with these inexpensive materials by a child with a little ingenuity; and the way to develop ingenuity in a child is to make demands upon his exercise. The most expensive box of bricks that

could be purchased would scarcely yield more enjoyment. The peas are to be put on the ends of the sticks, and can be used for making all kinds of architectural wonders, as well as the most simple shapes. To take a very common example : supposing it is wished to make a chair ; take a number of large peas and a few sticks, all of uniform size. With four of each of these form a square with a pea at each corner, the ends of two sticks being pushed into each pea. The square when finished must be both firm and straight. Take four more sticks and put them in the peas at the corners to form the legs. A pea at the end of each of these will make the chair stand better. Push two more sticks into two of the peas, and upon this form the back. This will give an idea how to form a very plain chair, which may be improved and ornamented indefinitely. Carriages, houses, churches, trains, and a large variety of figures may be made with these peas, according to the skill and ingenuity of the builder. The wheels of carriages may be made by pushing eight sticks into one large pea to form a circle, then making the outer circle of the wheel with sticks pushed into each pair of peas.

I am old-fashioned enough to think that children—both boys and girls—should be taught to sew. If they begin by making pretty things—not hum-drum useful things—they will soon get to be fond of the

work. Many a man who has travelled far away from mother and sisters has felt the desirability of knowing how to sew on a button, or to put the necessary stitch in linen; while girls, of course, ought to be taught needle-work, and the sooner they begin, the more likely they are to become proficient in the art. Wool-work always delights children, especially if affection gives them a motive for working. How delighted a little girl is to make a pair of slippers for her father! It is difficult to say which is the more pleased, the giver or the receiver. Very pretty balls can be made with wool; so soft that they will give rise to no anxiety about the ornaments or the windows. They are made as follows:—Take two round pieces of cardboard and cut a hole in the centre of each the size of half-a-crown. Wind wool through these holes round and round the cardboard till it is completely covered and the hole is filled up. Pass some string through the hole and tie it tightly in several places; then cut through the wool between the cards, and gradually little by little draw the cardboard away. Trim the edges of the wool evenly to make the ball smooth and neat, and it is ready for use. Wools of different colours should be used; and any little odds-and-ends of wool may be tied together and used instead of fresh wool.

Endless enjoyment may be had from cutting papers. When a little girl is old and steady enough to be en-

trusted with a pair of scissors, she may furnish her doll's-house not only with chairs and tables, but with paper inhabitants of various sizes. The only necessaries are a pair of sharp scissors and a little stiff paper; writing-paper or brown paper is the best. It is a little difficult to give clear verbal instructions for this kind of thing, and more might be learnt by once seeing it done than by reading the clearest description of it. One thing should be remembered, and that is, that if an object is intended to stand upright, a piece of the paper about an inch wide should be folded back on the side which is to be at the bottom, and when the object is cut out, this can be turned straight out to be level with the table, and so support the figure. Some things do not need this support: a chair, for instance. To make it, take a piece of stiff paper about two inches long and one inch broad. Divide this into three across the breadth, and mark the divisions closely with the thumb-nail. Cut a strip about a sixth of the width at each side of the two outer third portions to make the legs of the chair. Turn these strips down till they are perpendicular with the middle portion. Cut away the paper between the two front legs, and ornament the back of the chair as fancy dictates. Tables and stools may be made on the same principle. To make animals, double the paper, and cut out the shape of the side of the animal. Be

careful to make its legs square at the bottom, then open it very little, and it will stand on its four legs. To facilitate operations, the outline of the figure may be drawn before it is cut, and it may afterwards be improved by a few touches with pen or pencil. For human figures, the paper should be doubled, and the figures drawn in profile, and made to stand by being provided with good-sized feet. To make a house, take a piece of paper, turn back a piece at the bottom for it to stand on, then fold it in four lengthwise, and press thereon the divisions plainly. Turn back the two ends a little to make the sides of the house. Cut out the shape of the house, with roof and chimneys, then make the windows and door, being careful not to cut off the paper in forming these—in the case of the windows it can be folded back to form shutters.

A pennyworth of beads, with a needle and thread, will keep little children interested for a long time. They can make elaborate rings with a jewel of beads in the centre, chains, &c. I have seen scent-bags of beads made by quite little children, which were exceedingly pretty.

Drawing, too, is an occupation which children almost always enjoy. If possible, each one should have a slate and pencil, with a sponge tied to it to rub the slate clean. If the mother or nurse is able to *direct* the efforts of the children, so much the better.

Very pretty water-lilies may be made out of oranges as follows :—Take a sharp knife, and cut the skin of the oranges into sections, beginning at the top. Be careful not to pierce the fruit itself, and also to leave a small circle about a quarter of an inch in diameter at the stalk end of the orange untouched. Loosen these portions of skin from the orange so as not to break them, roll each one, and leave it rolled at the bottom of the orange. Divide the orange itself into sections, and do not separate them, but leave them joined near the bottom. Take the rolls of skin and place the tip of each one on the top of the orange, which will then assume an appearance somewhat resembling that of a half-opened water-lily. A dish of oranges prepared in this way has a very pretty effect.

Of course, it is evident that arranging for these little employments for the children involves a certain amount of trouble to the elders ; but is it not worth while ? By such means, children may be kept happy and contented instead of being mischievous and cross. They may acquire habits of industry and observation which they will retain through life. They may exhibit powers, the possession of which without these means would have been unsuspected. In short, the amusement of the child may be made a part of his education, and that not only without trouble, but with a great deal of pleasure to himself.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## HOW I DRESSED MY DAUGHTERS.

“How nicely the days are lengthening!” said I the other afternoon to Mrs. Astell, an old school-friend, who had lately come with her family to reside in our neighbourhood, and from whose society and that of her daughters my girls and I anticipated deriving much pleasure.

“Yes, indeed,” said Mrs. Astell, “but I cannot say that I am glad of it. It seems to me as if we were no sooner settled with winter dresses than spring came on, and everything had to be changed, and all the work begun over again. I envy you your boys ; girls are such a trouble to dress.”

“But you forget I have three daughters.”

“Of course you have ; I had quite forgotten. Well, don’t you find that it is a great anxiety at the beginning of the season to get them all fitted out with clothes ?”

“No, I cannot say that I do. We all set to work together, and soon get it over. It was very fatiguing when they were too young to help me, and I had



to do it all myself; but now Marian, my eldest girl, is a great assistance."

"But you do not mean to say that you make the dresses at home?"

"I could not afford to put them all out," I answered. "We are not rich, and that would most seriously increase our yearly expenditure."

"Of course it would, I understand that perfectly," said Mrs. Astell. "With the present fashions, the making of a dress costs almost as much as the material."

"We find that the saving effected is quite as great in the quantity of material required as in the mere cost of making, though that is considerable," said I. "I believe, in cutting out dresses for the four of us, we use fully eight yards less of material than would be considered necessary if a dressmaker had to dictate the quantity to us. When I say this, I do not at all mean to insinuate that dressmakers are dishonest; but, of course, it is not their interest, as it is ours, to plan, and measure, and save little corners here and there, and this it is that makes all the difference."

"And may I ask how old your girls are?" said my friend.

"Marian is sixteen, Alice is fourteen, and Jennie—the youngest—is twelve."

"Would you mind telling me how much their

dress costs? Indeed, I do not ask you out of idle curiosity.”

“I will tell you with pleasure,” I answered. “Taking one with the other, it costs thirty pounds a year.”

“Ten pounds each! It is almost incredible. And they look so nice. My daughters’ dress costs at least double. You must devote a very great deal of thought to it.”

“No, indeed. I believe my daughters think as little of dress as most people. I have a wholesome dread of fostering in them too great a love of dress, though on the other hand I am very far from wishing them to disregard it, and look upon it as a matter of no importance. I consider it is a duty we owe to society, and to husbands and fathers, that our appearance and that of our children should be bright and pleasing.”

“Well,” said Mrs. Astell, “as far as my experience of gentlemen goes, they do nothing but grumble if their wives and daughters wish to dress well.”

“Excuse me, don’t you think they grumble because they don’t like to have to pay so heavily for it? I fancy that most men would prefer that the ladies of their family should be elegant and tasteful rather than dowdy and old-fashioned in their appearance, if they had not found by experience that their preference would be gratified only at the expense of a

pretty deep plunge into their unfortunate pockets. In many cases, however, I believe the grumbling arises out of sheer disgust. No sensible man likes to discover that the minds of his womenfolk are entirely engrossed with thoughts of dress. As for us, I think I may say that the extent to which it occupies our thoughts is this. At the close of each season, as the time approaches for changing the dresses, we all devote ourselves energetically to the work for about a fortnight. When it is accomplished we leave it."

"But to be one's own dressmaker must involve a great deal of trouble."

"Of course it is a trouble. Most things that are worth having cost trouble, and very often something more. You have to make up your mind whether the advantage gained is worth what you give for it. Of course, every one must decide that for themselves. We find that it is."

"And how do you manage to fit the dresses? and where do you get the fashions?"

"The fashions we get from various sources. Whenever we see anything that strikes us as being very pretty, we notice how it is made, or friends give us ideas, or we look in the shop windows, and it is really very easy to gain a general notion of what is being worn. Then, if we care to do it, we can buy a couple of fashion-books every year, one at the end of summer

and one at the end of winter ; and there are places in every town where patterns cut out in tissue paper can be bought for a trifling cost. I should tell you, however, that though we endeavour to avoid having our things out of date, we do not attempt to have them in the *height* of fashion, but rather tasteful and neat."

"And why do you avoid the height of fashion?" said Mrs. Astell.

"For one thing, because dresses are more easily both made and altered when they have not so many frills, furbelows, and kiltings ; for another, because I think young girls never look so well as when they are simply dressed. Then as to the fit, after people are accustomed to it, there is no difficulty about that. If I were a new beginner at this sort of thing, I should rip up an old dress that fitted nicely, and cut the new material out by it. If, after being used, the pattern were cut out in brown paper, with a written word or two on each piece to say what it was for, and whether or not the turnings-in were allowed, it would last for a long time with slight alterations. I need scarcely say that we always tack the dresses loosely together at first, and fit them on before making them properly."

"Well, I think I shall try if I cannot do as you do," said Mrs. Astell. "The advantages are so great that it is worth while making the effort."

Mrs. Astell did try, and though she found it rather

difficult at first, and she and her daughters failed with one or two dresses, yet, as she had made the experiment with materials of trifling value, no great loss was sustained. Hilda Astell, the eldest of the sisters, was soon discovered to possess a decided talent for fitting dresses, and as my' Marian was particularly clever in trimming hats and bonnets, they used each to avail themselves of the other's services in these departments. I am quite sure that the saving they effected was considerable.

It must be evident, however, that in order to dress economically and well, attention has to be paid to something else than dressmaking and millinery, so I had better narrate in detail the plan we adopted to accomplish this desirable end. As I have before said, we calculated the expense of our dress one with the other—that is, we were very careful to buy good material, everything was the best of its kind, and then the dresses were made up again and again, and used for the younger ones after the elder ones had done with them. I do not think much of any fabric that cannot, with proper treatment, be worn for three seasons. Many will last for four or five. We were very fond of washing materials—such as hollands, cottons, and blue tickings for morning wear; French cambric and muslin for evening. When I say muslin, I do not mean thin muslin, but the thick white muslin with

a stripe or check on it, which can be worn with a lining quite up to the throat if necessary. If my girls went to a picnic or evening party, they always wore white. The advantage of these dresses is that after washing they look fresh and new. And here I must mention one great point—*we got them up at home*. When my eldest girl was about eight years old, a friend of my mother's came in to see us, and in talking to the child, asked her if she could wash and iron.

I laughed, and said—

“It is rather too early to begin that yet.”

“Not at all, my dear,” she replied. “If you will take my advice, you will buy the little girl a small box-iron and two heaters, and let her on regular days wash, starch, and iron her own doll's-clothes. If you do that, and, disregarding the trouble, take a little pains to show her how to do them properly, you will find that in a short time she can do small things for you; and when she is a big girl, will be able to do her own dresses.”

I followed this advice with all the girls, and the result is that Marian can get up her own dresses very nicely indeed, and assists me with her sisters'. We should find washing dresses very expensive if this were not done. I hear constantly of laundresses charging half-a-crown for muslin and piqué dresses, and more than that, of tearing and scorching them, so that they

have to be laid aside long before the proper amount of wear has been got out of them. I would therefore advise young ladies, with whom the expense of their dress is a consideration, to learn to iron. It is quite clean work, there is nothing dirty or disagreeable about it; and if they can do it, their dress during the summer may always be light, fresh, pretty, and very inexpensive. As to the washing, we had a good stock of summer dresses, and a woman came in once a fortnight to wash them out. We did the rest ourselves.

With these muslin dresses my girls wore natural flowers whenever they could get them, and in this way saved the money that would otherwise have had to be spent on ribbons or artificial ones. We had fortunately a piece of ground belonging to our house. Very small it was; but they took a little pains with it, put in seeds, and reared a few plants—just sufficient for the table and for their hair and dress. Perhaps it was a mother's partiality, but I never saw any girls who looked in my eyes better than mine did, with their bright faces, their simple dresses, and a rose, a scarlet geranium, or perhaps a few ivy-leaves or holly-berries in hair and bosom. Surely there is nothing in nature half so pretty as an unaffected, pretty girl, prettily dressed.

There are of course many people so circumstanced that they cannot get up their own dresses. To these

I would recommend alpacas of all shades, which look well, and have an endless amount of wear in them : also bèges and shalets—good shalets, costing about two shillings and tenpence per yard. Alpacas, however, are the best. A superior black alpaca looks almost as well as a silk. By the way, it is very nice when a girl can have one pretty silk dress ; but this cannot be obtained out of ten pounds a year. For winter wear we chose French merinoes and woollen reps, and were careful to buy a couple of yards of any fabric more than was required for immediate use, and with these we were able to make afterwards any alterations we wished. I always made a point of doing this, because I had again and again been obliged to throw dresses aside for want of a little extra material ; which, if not purchased at the time, I had found difficulty in matching when repairs were necessary. I am very partial to subdued colours in dress. If a girl is awkward, the awkwardness is not so conspicuous ; and if she is pretty, the prettiness will not be overpowered.

Bonnets and hats of course were trimmed at home, and seldom cost more than six or eight shillings each.

We followed the same rule with underclothing that we did with dresses. We chose good calico, and took pains to make them nicely, and then there was always



satisfaction in looking at and wearing them. At the same time, they were not too elaborately trimmed, on account of the ironing. I need scarcely say that we never thought of *buying* embroidery. We wore Welsh flannel; for, though it does not look quite so well as the Lancashire to begin with, it wears much better; and also Balbriggan hose. On two points I was most particular, and those were gloves and boots. However well a lady may be dressed in every other respect, if these are defective, all the rest will be spoilt. A badly-fitting glove, or an untidy, unshapely boot, would detract from the appearance of the best-dressed lady in the world. There are no two particulars in which our French neighbours excel us more than in these. With regard to them, I can only repeat what I have said about so many other things—that the best are the cheapest. Good kid gloves can be cleaned again and again—that is, if they are not worn too long. For every-day wear, the best calf-skin look very nice, and are much more serviceable than kid. If practicable, the colour should correspond with that of the bonnet. As to boots, the same principle applies. We paid a higher price per pair than many of our friends, but we found on comparing notes that ours wore three times as long as theirs, and that our yearly expenditure was not nearly so high. The great mistake which people make about boots is in wearing them too far before

they send them to be repaired. There is no article of a lady's attire of which it may more truly be said, "A stitch in time saves nine." It is good economy to buy boots six months before they are wanted, wear them once or twice to fit them to the foot, then put them away to season.

I think it will be evident that by managing our dress thus—buying everything thoroughly good, and getting the full amount of wear out of them—many articles did not need replacing for three or four years. A mantle was kept two years for best and two years for every-day wear. A waterproof was expected to last at least as long, and the hollands and alpacas the same; and thus the replenishing of the entire wardrobe was spread over a period of four or five years.

I am quite aware that by many people these ideas of mine about dress will be looked upon as rather too quiet and old-fashioned; but I can only say that if my daughters have never been remarkable for their dressiness, neither have they been so for their want of it; and they have done me no discredit when placed in comparison with companions upon whom much larger sums of money have been spent. And when I look around and see how great the tendency is at the present day to bring up girls with no other idea in life than to regard as the chief end thereof the solution of

the problem: Wherewithal shall I be clothed? I am better satisfied that my daughters, whilst neat and unpretentious in attire, should have acquired habits of self-help and economy, and remain simple and natural, than that they should be in the possession of extensive wardrobes by the indulgence of extravagant tastes.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE ART OF SHOPPING.

“BARGAINS ! Bargains !! Bargains !!! Selling off !!!! For a few days only—The whole of a Bankrupt’s Stock, at fifty per cent. below cost price.—Silks, Laces, Velvets, Furs, Hosiery, Ribbons,” &c. &c. &c.

I looked at the flaming advertisement, and thought this was just the chance for me. Our housekeeping bills *were* large, there was no doubt about it ; and Jack, dear, good Jack, who was so patient and kind, had said only that morning that he wished I would try to buy things less expensively, and not make all my purchases at the largest and best shops. Really, the times were so hard, and the children wanted so many things, and he looked so anxious, that if I could save two or three shillings, what a good thing it would be ! So I boldly entered the shop.

It was very much crowded. There were evidently a good many people besides myself who wanted to save a few shillings. I had to wait some minutes before I could be attended to, and every one seemed so eager and so impatient that I got quite nervous. At last a

shopman came up and inquired what I wanted. I all but replied, "Bargains! Bargains!! Bargains!!! Fifty per cent. below cost price." I had been so absorbed in the idea of saving a few shillings, and thinking of Jack and the children, that I had entered the shop more with an idea of reducing my household expenditure generally than of purchasing any particular article. However, now that I was in I must buy something; but what? that was the question. It had been a great rule with mother, who had been a notable housekeeper, and who was taken from us all too soon, that everything was dearly bought that was not wanted; and just now I did not want anything pressingly.

The shopman—who, I suppose, thought from my silence, and my evident bewilderment, that I was in search of something rather out of the way—here began enumerating the various articles which were on this occasion only to be obtained on such advantageous terms.

"Silks, ma'am?—lovely black silks, fifty per cent. below cost price—table-cloths, towelling, flannels—"

"Flannel!" that was the very thing. It was always useful where there were children; and our eldest girl would soon require some new flannel petticoats. "I want to look at some flannel, if you please."

"Certainly, ma'am.—Flannel for this lady."

“It must be white flannel, strong, and of a wide width,” I said, in answer to the shopman to whose care I was now committed.

“What length did you require, ma’am? We have some very cheap remnants, really almost being given away. This one, seven yards and three-quarters, we can supply, during the sale only, for eight and tenpence.”

I rapidly calculated. I should want two yards for each petticoat; four yards would do.

“Have you a remnant of four yards?”

“Well, I am afraid not exactly four yards, madam; five yards and a quarter we could do for you, or two yards and three-quarters, or three yards and a third, or one and a half; but not four yards. Don’t you think this would do, ma’am—five yards and a quarter? Remarkably cheap, five and threepence three-farthings. You will find that this flannel will wear like a piece of wire; we can warrant it not to shrink. Thank you, ma’am. What else can I have the pleasure? Children’s socks, ma’am?—ridiculous price, twopence halfpenny each; very good socks—ordinary price, eightpence three-farthings. Eight pairs?—thank you, ma’am. Some very cheap children’s gloves, ma’am. One penny farthing per pair. Four pairs?—thank you, ma’am. Should never think of offering them at that price, but we wish to clear out our summer’s stock before the winter.”

“Oh! I thought it was a bankrupt’s stock?”

“Certainly, ma’am, bankrupt’s stock. Here are some remarkably cheap children’s dress-pieces—remnants—six yards, one and elevenpence three-farthings—elegant goods; eight yards, two and elevenpence three-farthings; thank you, ma’am—the eight yards. Some cheap kid gloves for your own wear, one and sixpence farthing, as good as those usually sold for two and sixpence halfpenny per pair. One pair?—thank you, ma’am. One pair quite sufficient, do you think, ma’am?—selling out very quickly. Two pairs?—thank you. Is there nothing more to-day? We have some very cheap articles here; we don’t wish you to buy, only to look” (this was in answer to a deprecatory movement from me, for I was rather alarmed in thinking of the number of things I had already purchased). “We merely wish you to see what we are doing. Very cheap collars, three halfpence each, ma’am—one and threepence per dozen; capital collars—last all the winter. These are really bargains. As soon as the sale is over we shall mark them at their proper price—sixpence halfpenny each. One dozen only? Nothing more to-day, you think, ma’am?”

“Nothing more, that is quite all,” I replied decidedly, for though I had certainly purchased the articles at ridiculously low prices, I had bought rather

more than I intended, and was anxious to see what I had to pay.

The bill was soon made out : flannel, five and threepence three-farthings ; hosiery, one and eightpence ; gloves, fivepence ; dress remnant, two and eleven three-farthings ; ladies' gloves, three and a penny ; collars, one and threepence ; total, fourteen and eightpence halfpenny. Surely I had not spent fourteen and eightpence halfpenny ! Socks, twopence halfpenny ; gloves, three-halfpence—fourteen and eightpence halfpenny ! It was incredible ! That was a large sum out of my allowance of three pounds a week. However, it had to be paid, and arranging for the parcel to be forwarded immediately, I left the shop.

“I have been buying some bargains at a shop where they were selling off, Jack,” I said to my husband.

“That's right, little wife, if you have only bought wisely. Let us look over your parcel. Why, what is this for ? it seems a nondescript sort of an article. Is it for drawing-room curtains ?”

“Oh, Jack ! that is for a dress for Nellie.”

“A dress for Nellie ! rather light for winter, is it not ?”

Of course it was. The children wanted warm clothing now, and the material I had bought was thin, and soiled as well. I looked tremblingly over the



parcel, and it was astonishing how different everything seemed when quietly examined at home. The socks were none of them the right size, and if they had been they were so commonly made up, and had such thick heavy seams, that they would have pained the delicate little feet; the gloves were soiled and thin, of no use in the cold weather, and when next summer came the children would have outgrown them; the kid gloves for myself split right across directly they were put on, and were besides evidently intended for some deformed individual, one of whose fingers was considerably thinner than the rest; the collars were badly shaped, and never would fit; and although the flannel, the only article that answered the purpose for which it was intended, was both good and cheap, I had a yard and a quarter more than I wanted.

“Never mind, little wife,” said Jack, who looked very much inclined to laugh, but was restrained out of compassion for the mute misery depicted on my countenance; “you’ll learn wisdom by experience. Better luck next time—only we can’t afford many experiences like this.”

Evidently this sort of thing would not answer. Usually I went to good shops, and got good articles; but on comparing notes with my friends, found I paid the highest price for everything. Happy thought! I would talk to Fanny Herbert about it, and take her

advice. She was such a clever housekeeper—at least, so people said, though for my own part I must say—

Fanny was delighted to be of use. It struck me that a glow of delight spread over her countenance when she heard that I had been such a goose, but, of course, that I must bear. She said—

“I think, my dear, on the whole, you will find that people living in London can buy drapery goods as reasonably as can be expected. No dweller in any town in England possesses equal advantages with a Londoner for dressing elegantly, and at the same time economically. At these very sales of which you have now such a wholesome dread, very cheap purchases may be made, if you only make up your mind before you enter the shop what, and what quantity, you intend to buy, and do not allow yourself to purchase anything which you do not require. No, the difficulty in housekeeping is, to my mind, decidedly not dress, but provisions. Did you ever buy your meat at one of the large markets?”

“No, I never did.”

“I always buy mine at the Farringdon Market. The train brings me to within five minutes' walk of the place. I take with me a large straw bag in which to carry my meat; when I have made my purchases, I hire a boy, at the small charge of a penny, to carry my load to the station, and, on leaving the train, a railway

porter or a small boy is generally to be found who will assist me in conveying my provisions to my residence. Go with me, and doubtless you will effect a material saving."

When Jack was told of our plan, he said he could do better than that. He could go to the market for me, and bring up what I required. This was charming. I quite longed for the time to come when I could save a little money in the purchase of a joint of meat.

"Let us be careful about one thing, dear Annie," said Jack, "and that is, not to buy more than we positively need; I feel sure that is *the* great mistake with young housekeepers. They buy too much of a thing, and so any saving that they may make in buying cheaply is swallowed in the unnecessary outlay."

I was obliged to assent to this, though my spirit was beginning to rebel against the constant allusions to my one unlucky escapade.

The next evening a cab drove up to our door, rather before the usual hour for Jack's return. Cabs were so unusual with us, frugal people that we were, that a melancholy vision immediately crossed my mind, of my husband run over by a brewer's van, and brought home, maimed and injured for life. This fear was soon dissipated by the appearance of Jack, triumphantly bearing a straw bag, from which he speedily produced a large leg of mutton.

“This is the way to save, evidently, Annie,” said he, scarcely waiting to lay aside his coat and hat before he entered on the subject. “How much do you say you pay Jackson per pound for a leg of mutton?”

“Tenpence halfpenny,” I replied.

“Tenpence halfpenny! Fancy that! Here is a fine leg of mutton, weighing seven pounds and a half—ninepence per pound—five and sevenpence halfpenny only for that splendid joint, my dear. Why, let me see. At tenpence halfpenny per pound you would have paid six and sixpence three-farthings for that leg of mutton. Here is a clear saving effected on one joint of meat only of elevenpence and one farthing. But there is no question, this sort of shopping ought to be done by a man. It is not at all the sort of thing for a lady. It is necessary to bargain, and that you would not like, and I should not like it for you.”

“But, Jack, the cab! I suppose you took the cab to carry the leg of mutton. How much did you pay for the cab?”

“Ah!” said Jack, “that was two shillings, but——”

“Oh, Jack!” I cried, “we’re quits, we’re quits! Never mind, darling, you’ll learn wisdom by experience. Better luck next time—only we can’t af——”

But Jack had rushed out of the room.

This was in my early housekeeping days. Since

that time I have made several attempts to buy things at the cheapest, and have often found I paid considerably more in the long run than I should have done if I had bought them in the regular way. I have been taken by obliging friends to wholesale warehouses, where they had an introduction, to find that there I could only buy articles by the dozen. I have braved the pressing attentions of furniture dealers, and bidden at auctions, to find that, when they reached home, the goods I thought so excellent were damaged. I have exchanged something I did not want for something I did, to find that—on my part at least—exchange was no robbery; and I think I may now congratulate myself on having learnt from experience a few lessons, which I would gladly give to wives and mothers desirous of cultivating the art of shopping.

One of these lessons is, that there is no economy in buying a third-rate article because it is cheap. The best is usually worth the highest price. Of course, in many instances, this kind of economy cannot be practised, because the money is not at hand; but it is well worth a thought whether it would not be wiser to put off buying anything at all until one can afford to buy it good. With children's dresses, for example, how a good material can be passed from one child to another, then turned, re-turned, made up again, altered, re-fitted, trimmed differently, and brought out at last

once more as good as new. Of course, I am supposing now that the mother can use her fingers. If the dress has to be "put out" each time, there will not be much saving. Oh, that in these days of enlightenment it were a little more usual for girls to be clever with their needles!

Another lesson is that a thing is not necessarily good because it is expensive. Here experience and common sense must come in. It is astonishing how soon a little attention will enable a person to tell at once whether a material is likely to wear, or to wash, or to shrink, or to fade, or to fray, or to cut, or any other horror. Like every science, the art of shopping requires learning, study, and forethought; and when it is thoroughly acquired by a wife or mother, she may by its aid procure comforts, and even elegancies, for a sum which without it merely suffices for necessaries.

There is an old proverb which, like many another, is full of wisdom, and that is, "A store is no sore." It is, generally speaking, a saving both of time and money to buy a large quantity at a time of anything that will be likely to increase in price; and those who, without forethought, buy each day only what is required for the day's needs, to use another old proverb, "let money run out at the heels of their boots." Coal may be laid in at the end of the summer to last through the winter; potatoes may be bought by the

sack or the load, instead of by the pound ; apples by the bushel ; and soap by the hundred-weight, for soap will not waste half so much if it be kept till it is dry. In this way many pennies and shillings may be saved.

Care should be taken, too, to remark at once upon any goods sent in which are not quite as they ought to be. Undoubtedly, and naturally, tradesmen give their choicest goods to their largest customers. Next to these come the customers who know when they are well served, and who decline to have inferior articles palmed off upon them. Unless this is done systematically, like David Copperfield, "our appearance in a shop will be the signal for all the damaged goods to be brought out immediately." Above all—and this is advice which, though often given, cannot be too often repeated—do your shopping yourself. Do not give your orders to the servants to give to the tradespeople ; but go round to the shops, choose what you want, and pay for it at once. That most objectionable practice of a tradesman sending round, and a mistress giving orders for articles, to be paid for—some time, is the cause of ruin and misery in many a home. Of course, a tradesman puts on an extra charge for credit—it is only fair that he should ; of course, it prevents the bills being constantly and closely checked, which is the right thing both for customers and dealers ; and it leads to the purchase of many an unnecessary

article, which would never have been thought of if the money had had to be paid down at once. Personal illness, or more urgent duty, may prevent the mistress of a household from doing her own shopping; but love of ease and indolence ought never to be allowed to do so. And these are the great hindrances to the acquisition of the art of shopping. Given a certain amount of health, energy, and common sense, and what may not a woman accomplish? In providing for the wants of her household, experience daily grows upon her, and in an incredibly short space of time she comes to understand one of the great secrets of modern domestic life, and that is, not only to make each sixpence do its lawful and proper work, but in many instances to let it stand in the place of a shilling.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## GOING TO THE SEASIDE.

THERE is no doubt that, to a great number of people, half the pleasure of going away consists in talking about it beforehand. It is so very delightful when you are in the midst of work to feel that rest is coming, to know that you will soon be called on to decide what watering-place you shall visit—to hear the *pros* and *cons* regarding first one spot and then another—to listen to the experiences and recommendations of friends, each one contradicting what the other has said, and so being kept in a most charming state of uncertainty. And then at last, after making up your mind that Sweetrest is the very thing—that it is neither too far away nor too near, too expensive nor too crowded, neither too relaxing for George nor too bracing for Edith—to discover that there are two or three other places just as suitable, and that you must begin all your work over again.

It cannot be denied, either, that when the holiday is gained it oftener than not turns out a failure, especially in the case of those who have thoroughly

earned the rest, who greatly need it, and who yet are to a great extent obliged to carry their work and their anxiety with them. This is because, whilst they are so happy as to have about them a number of little children, they do not possess at the same time such a superfluity of this world's goods as to enable them to procure necessary comforts without feeling a good deal of anxiety about the expense. People of this kind start off with their children to some place of which they know nothing, thinking that if only they can get away for a little while from the town, with its noise and bustle, they will be all right. Then in order to be economical they crowd themselves into close, ill-ventilated apartments, and for the same reason live poorly and submit to various discomforts, and so at the end of two or three weeks return home with cheeks browned by the sun, it may be, and therefore looking better, but without having received any permanent benefit from the change ; as they discover when, after a short return to the old routine, they are obliged to acknowledge that they are as nervous and weak as before they started.

It ought to be remembered that though fresh air and change of scene are most excellent, they are not everything, and that the good which they do may be entirely destroyed if they are accompanied by poor living, bad drainage, ill-ventilated apartments, and

worry. When a lady and gentleman go away without "encumbrances," as the dear little ones are very unfairly called, they can go where they like, and do as they like, but when they have to take a number of children with them it is quite different. Then if the holiday is to be a success it must be gone about in a business-like way, with the express object of getting out of it as much good as possible, both for parents and children.

In order to do this, it must first be decided how much money is to be spent on the occasion, and a good margin must be allowed for unforeseen expenses. It is so very annoying to find at the end of the holiday that more money has been spent than was intended, and so be under the necessity of economising half the winter, because of a little thoughtlessness during a month of the summer.

Then the next thing is to fix upon a suitable place. In doing this, I would advise that the spot chosen should not be at such a distance from home that it is necessary to take a very long journey in order to reach it; for if that is the case, the toil of getting the children there and back will be greater than the pleasure of the holiday—that it should not be too near, or the husband and father will be running up to business two or three days a week, and there will be very little rest for *him*—and that great care should be

taken that there is no cause for anxiety about the drainage. Some watering-places are weak in this respect, and those who visit them gain anything but health during their stay.

As to long distances, there are many, I know, who think it worth their while to make an effort and try to see a different place every year. One friend of mine, who had a little family, used to go to the Land's End, which was about two hundred miles from her home, and she made a point of travelling in the night with the children, and so getting the greater part of the journey over whilst they were asleep. When talking to her about it, however, I could not help thinking that the game was not worth the candle. My husband and I were persuaded on one occasion to travel a long distance to a much-admired spot, and I never shall forget the discomfort we experienced. Part of the journey had to be made by water, and all the children were sick. We reached our destination two hours later than we expected—no lodgings were taken; it was raining, and I had to take care of the children whilst my husband set off in the darkness and the rain to look for apartments. We were so thoroughly miserable that we heartily wished ourselves safely at home, and determined that we would not attempt a journey of that sort again until the children were old enough to look after themselves.

It is much better to take lodgings beforehand, when such a thing is practicable, so that there may be a resting-place and a comfortable meal ready for the little ones after their journey. Even those who have not experienced it can imagine how very unpleasant it must be to keep the children waiting at the railway station, or at an hotel, whilst the elders of the party go to hunt for apartments. It is well worth while to send down a responsible person a day or two before to engage rooms; and it is oftener than not good economy to do this, because in the anxiety to get settled people are much more likely to dispense with certain comforts, or to pay for what they require at a higher rate than they would do if they had time to look about them.

It is very important to have clean, airy apartments and plenty of room, no crowding. It is very bad policy to be doing all one can to get fresh air and health for twelve hours out of the twenty-four, and be undoing the good the other twelve. Hot, stuffy, and ill-ventilated rooms are no less bad at the seaside than they are anywhere else; and a stay of three weeks in comfortable, healthy lodgings is more likely to be beneficial than a month spent in a close, crowded house.

In taking the apartments, it is always best to have a proper understanding about the terms. Rooms are

generally let at so much a week, and "extras." These extras are an indefinite quantity. Sometimes they mean only boot-cleaning, often they include the use of the kitchen-fire at various prices, and the washing of the linen used by the lodgers. I have some friends who were once called upon to pay for the use of the furniture, the crockery, the cruet, and other articles which it was said were included in extras. Of course the charges made at lodging-houses are very often perfectly reasonable, but for all that it is right the lodger should know what and for what he is expected to pay.

If the rooms are taken by the week, and the visitor finds that he can stay two or three days longer than he at first intended, he should by no means leave these two or three days to be charged for at discretion, or he may find himself wofully taken in. It is much pleasanter for all parties to think about and arrange these things beforehand, rather than to have any unpleasantness when the time comes to leave. Nothing can be more annoying than to find, when you wish to make up accounts, that you have a bill sent in which very much exceeds the amount you expected.

Those who wish to gain health and strength from their holiday should make up their minds that they will live well during their absence from home. When I say live well, I do not mean that they should live

luxuriously or extravagantly, but that they should have wholesome food and plenty of it. The same remark may be made about this that was made about the rooms. It is better to stay three weeks at a place and do the thing sensibly, than to stay a month and save the money out of necessaries.

In making preparations for a visit to the seaside, it should never be forgotten that we have a very variable climate, and that therefore it is necessary to be prepared for cold and rain, as well as hot and dry weather. As the sea air ruins so many dress fabrics, it is much more economical, in choosing what dresses are to be taken, to give the preference to those which can be washed and got up again. When my boys were small, I found it a good plan in the hot weather to make each of them four suits of blue ticking, trimmed with white cotton braid. The cost of these, made at home, was about two shillings and threepence a suit, and they could be worn for three seasons, being passed on from one child to another. The boys had a clean suit every other day, and at the end of the week my nurse washed them out. When we were at the seaside, she washed them in the bath in which the children were tubbed. They wanted nothing but washing and ironing: starching and boiling were not required. The children always looked fresh and clean in them, and they saved more expensive clothes.

It is best to take the first day or two of a holiday very quietly. The temptation is, of course, great to set to work and try to make oneself thoroughly acquainted with all the ins and outs of a place straight away. It will generally be found, however, that a sudden and complete change of air and scenery, and an alteration in the way of living, seem to be rather hurtful than otherwise for a short time, and that after the excitement of the arrival and getting settled is over, the visitor begins to feel languid and lazy. It is best to give way to this feeling. I have heard it said by those who professed to understand such matters, that this was a sign the change was going to be beneficial in the long run. Of course our energetic young friend, who is nothing if he is not muscular, will not care to keep quiet; but anyhow, until partially acclimatised to the place, he will find it better to be contented with strolling gently about, walking on the sands or cliff, and quietly absorbing as much ozone as possible. Then, as he begins to feel he is improving, he can take more and more exercise, explore the beauties of the neighbourhood, and make himself thoroughly familiar with all the nooks and corners of his retreat, and the manners and customs of its inhabitants. If, however, in the exuberance of his spirits he pursue a different course—resolve to “do” the place, and know as much about it as the oldest inhabitant in a few



hours—to watch the sun rise from the topmost peak of the highest mountain in the neighbourhood the first morning after his arrival, with two or three other little exploits of the same description—he will in all probability spend a fair portion of his holiday in crawling about, with stiff joints and exhausted energies, over the few yards of sand which can be most easily reached from his lodgings.

For the same reason I think it is better to wait a day or two before bathing. To those who are fond of the water this would be a great deprivation, but it is one which will, I am sure, be well repaid by the increased strength and the larger amount of enjoyment that will eventually be gained. Those who bathe in the sea ought never to omit to plunge the head under the waves and thoroughly wet the crown. The oilskin caps which are sometimes worn by ladies to keep the hair dry are an abomination, and ought to be discarded. If the head is not wetted, a headache at the very least is almost sure to follow.

Whilst I am speaking on this subject, I must say a word on the unreasonable length of time some bathers remain in the water. The first time of bathing a person should only be in the sea a few minutes, then come out, dress quickly, and take a brisk walk. Gradually a longer bathe may be indulged in. It must be evident to the most casual observer that it cannot be

good, for those who only occasionally enjoy the luxury of a sea-bath, to remain in it half or three-quarters of an hour, and come out chilled and tired. The worst of this sort of thing is that the individual is led to fancy that bathing does not agree with him (or her, for young ladies are much to be blamed on this account), and so gives it up altogether, when if he or she had been content to enjoy it in moderation they might have been ever so much better for it.

Many parents have an idea that paddling in the sea is so good for strengthening children's ankles. No doubt it is when gone about sensibly. But how can any good be expected to follow when children remain two or three hours with their feet in the water, then put on damp stockings over their half-dried feet and legs, and perhaps wear the clothes that have been splashed with the waves all the rest of the day? Paddling ought never to be allowed excepting when the sun is shining and the sand is warm; the children ought not to do it for an unreasonable length of time, and the mother or nurse should be on the sands with them to keep the shoes and boots dry, and see that the little feet are well rubbed with a dry towel. When these precautions are taken, paddling will not only do no harm, but very likely do good. A clever physician told me that when he resided, as he did for many years, in one of our fashionable watering-places,

a large part of his practice was devoted to children who had brought on diseases of the limbs with injudicious paddling.

Of the thousand and one ways of "improving the occasion" of a visit to the seaside I have said nothing, neither have I anything to say, as such matters must be left to the individual taste of the visitor. In the interest of my young friends I will, however, venture to protest against the practice of turning the annual trip into a prolonged cram, and thus making that which should be enjoyed as an entire relaxation from all work, especially that of the brain, a mere out-door school in which anemones and rocks have been substituted for books and desks.

It will be evident that the suggestions I have offered are intended mainly for those who find it desirable to combine economy with pleasure. To those to whom money is no object my remarks may seem to savour more of parsimony than prudence. Still I may remind even these fortunate persons that a larger amount of comfort and pleasure is often to be secured by the exercise of a little forethought and common sense about small matters than by a lavish expenditure, which, however little felt, is seldom productive of a satisfactory result.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## HOW WE MADE OUR PICNIC A SUCCESS.

“MAMMA—oh, mamma!” said my daughter Bertha, breaking suddenly into the room where I was sitting at work, one lovely morning in summer, “Mrs. Thompson has sent to invite us to join their picnic. May we accept? Do let us, mamma. I should so like it.”

“When are they going, dear, and where?”

“They are going next Thursday. Mrs. Thompson says that the weather seems settled, and is so beautiful just now, that it would be a great pity not to take advantage of it. You remember that charming wood near Mrs. Thompson’s old home? They are going there. They have drawn up a most attractive programme. First of all, every person is particularly requested to fortify him or herself with a thoroughly good and substantial breakfast before starting——”

“Which every person will feel particularly disinclined to do, you may be quite sure,” interrupted Frank, who seemed very much amused with Bertha’s enthusiasm.

“Now, Frank, don’t be disagreeable and make difficulties out of nothing,” said his sister. “Mamma, may we go?”

“You did not finish your programme, my dear. What other arrangements have been made, besides the one to advise every one to take a good breakfast?”

“Oh, after that each one is to provide for himself. There is to be no rule but liberty. Mrs. Thompson says she knows that we can hire a conveyance of some kind to take our provisions to the place where we are to have refreshment; and she only wishes to make one suggestion, and that is, that our preparations shall be simple and inexpensive, for she does not think we should any of us care to spend very much money. As Ada said, when I was speaking to her about it, we are not going to eat and drink, but to enjoy fresh air and beautiful scenery, and the pleasure of one another’s society.”

“Am I to be of the party?” inquired Frank at this juncture.

“Of course you are, Frank; I should never think of going without you.”

“Then,” said Frank, assuming an oratorical air, “I am sure you will excuse me, Bertha, if I speak my mind. I have been listening to you, so far, with a fraternal interest only, but now the question becomes

painfully personal. What was it I learnt in my young days?—

‘A little bird who all day long  
Had cheered the forest with his song,  
Began to feel, as well he might,  
The keen demands of appetite.’

Consider, my dear sister. Fresh air and exercise have a tendency to make one feel hungry; beautiful scenery and pleasant companionship, in those circumstances, will not alone suffice for us. Do not, I beg of you, allow us to run short of provender.”

“No, we won’t run short,” said Bertha; “we will have enough to eat, but we must have it uncomfortably. That is the chief charm of a picnic. What one looks forward to is to have one’s dinner jerked into somebody else’s lap, just as one was going to enjoy it. If we were to have every convenience, we might as well stay at home.—What am I to wear, mamma?”

“Of course, that is always a girl’s question,” said Frank.

“We will arrange that, my dear,” I answered.

“If *I* might be allowed to offer a little advice,” said papa, when he heard us talking over our arrangements, “I should say :—First, don’t forget to take a corkscrew; secondly, don’t forget to take some salt; and, thirdly—and this is the most important of all,” he continued, stroking Bertha’s hair—“be sure to take

plenty of warm wraps, to wear when the heat of the day is over."

The eventful morning dawned, to use the language of story-books. Bertha's constantly-expressed fear that the weather would change proved groundless, for the morning was lovely.

After a good deal of excitement, and one or two false starts, the young people set off; and then, and only then, silence reigned in the house. After they had gone, I sat down for a few minutes and mentally congratulated myself. "For once they have taken everything they will require," I thought. "They have a corkscrew, they have salt, sugar, forks, knives, plates, spoons, provisions, glass, and wraps. Surely nothing has been forgotten."

"Oh, mamma!" were the first words with which I was greeted on their return, "after all, we forgot the corkscrew."

"But, my dear children, I put it myself into Frank's knapsack—into that nice little inner pocket that fastens up so beautifully."

Frank and Bertha looked at one another.

"I never looked there," said Frank; "I searched the hamper and the knapsack, but I never thought of the little pocket. And everybody had forgotten one. We had to break the necks of the bottles, until at last it was discovered that a gentleman of the party pos-

sessed the gift of screwing out corks with his pocket-handkerchief, and from that moment he devoted himself exclusively to that occupation, and afterwards presented his pocket-handkerchief to a friend, as a proof of much love and great esteem."

"Really," I said, "what a pity you could not find the corkscrew! I was congratulating myself and thinking that this time we had been clever enough to remember everything. At any rate, you found the salt?"

"Oh, yes!" said Bertha, "it was beautifully wrapped up in white paper, and Frank thought it was sugar, and most politely showered it over Mr. Thompson's gooseberry tart."

"Mr. Thompson did not quite like it," said Frank; "he had got a good slice of tart, and it was covered with cream, enough to make your mouth water, and it was the last slice too. I was very sorry, but I really did not intend it."

"Well, children, take it altogether, what sort of a day has it been?"

"Oh! it has been 'most charming," said Bertha. "Nearly everything went wrong."

"It has been a charming day, certainly," said Frank; "the weather has been beautiful, the woods were simply delicious, but I must say the arrangements were a failure."



“How so?” I asked.

“It was understood that every one was to take what they liked—to please themselves, in short. The consequence was that there was no co-operation. Four of the providers thought that knives and forks could be hired, and brought none. One lady had the same impression about plates, and came without them. Another had been thinking that we should make a gipsy encampment, light a fire, and cook our own provisions; so she brought a most delicious little luncheon, but uncooked. There were birds trussed for roasting, rashers of bacon, fresh eggs, potatoes, but everything had to be taken back again.”

“I am so sorry for that lady,” said Bertha, “she seemed so disappointed, and every one seemed to think her idea so absurd.”

“So it was,” said Frank, “most preposterous. Who ever heard of cooking the provisions out-of-doors? Why, it would be no end of trouble!”

“But, mamma,” said Bertha, “did not you tell us that you managed picnic dinners in that way when you were a girl?”

“Certainly I did. We used to have great fun, and we made up our minds to the trouble. We built a fire over a flat stone as soon as we got into the woods, and let it burn till the embers were quite hot. Then we raked it, made it up again, and wrapped whatever was

to be cooked, first, in plenty of wet brown paper, which we had taken with us for the purpose, and afterwards in sand, and laid it in the cinders, and left it until we thought it was done enough. We always took a frying-pan with us, in which to fry bacon and poach eggs."

"And how did you manage about coffee, mamma?" said Bertha, "because Mrs. Thompson said she did not think it could be taken."

"Oh, we took freshly-ground coffee with us, tied loosely in a coarse white flannel bag, and a coffee-pot. We found no difficulty about it."

"That is the kind of picnic I should like," said Bertha.

"I should not care for it at all," said Frank; "I do not enjoy performing as an amateur cook."

"It is great fun for a change," I said, "but to make it a success, every one should go in for it *con amore*. But go on with to-day's experience."

"One lady brought some cream, and did not cork it up closely, and the cork came out, and the cream had run into all the rest of the things. One hamper contained some very nice rolls and fresh butter—the butter had melted with the heat, and was more like oil than anything else."

"Oh, Frank!" said Bertha, "you are exaggerating.—Mamma, it was not so bad as that."

“Then,” continued Frank, “we were the only ones who had taken salt ; and there was no corkscrew.”

“You seem to have been unfortunate indeed ; I think there was room for a little management.”

“How would you have done it, mamma?” said Frank.

“I would either have given the entire charge of everything to one person, or I would have had a small committee of ladies, and let them consult and work together.”

“That would be an excellent plan,” said Bertha. “Mamma, *you* arrange for a picnic, and take the management yourself.”

“Ah ! Bertha wants another picnic,” said papa, laughing.

“Yes, I do,” said Bertha ; “I like picnics, however they are managed.”

“No,” I answered, “I should not care to take the entire charge of it ; it would be too much trouble. I do not at all object, however, to join five or six ladies in the work, and we will see what can be done.”

Accordingly, picnic No. 2 was decided upon. And for the benefit of those who feel inclined to follow our example, I will, as nearly as I can remember it, give an account of the provision we made, and show how we divided the responsibility. Thirty friends were invited, and amongst these there were three or

four members of seven families, as well as a few ladies and gentlemen who were allowed to join us "promiscuous," without taking their share of the work. One gentleman undertook to provide the beverages, and he solemnly pledged himself to take three corkscrews. We felt that this was a great assistance to us, and also that the work was much more suitable for a gentleman than it would have been for a lady. Our committee consisted of seven ladies, one lady representing each family, and we had a president, to whom each member of the committee gave a list of the money she had expended. This lady's husband paid all other expenses—railway fares, carriages, &c. The two accounts were put together, and the expenses were afterwards equally divided amongst all those who took part in the picnic, each person's share of the expense being handed to the president before the party broke up. The ladies divided the work as follows:—

Lady No. 1 took the entire responsibility of providing and looking after the knives, forks, plates, tumblers, wine-glasses, spoons, dishes, salt-cellars, table-cloths, and dinner-napkins. These were packed by themselves, and were carefully counted twice over before they were put into the hamper, and again before being returned to it, after having been used. I know this lady hired what was wanted, as she said she preferred doing that to running any risk of having

her own or her friends' possessions lost or broken. She got everything she wanted for about £1. She also took two pounds of good cheese, a piece of cream cheese, a block of ice a foot square, which was wrapped in a clean piece of old carpet, and a hammer and chisel to break it with. Inside the carpet, near the ice, was laid a pound and a half of butter in a tin box.

No. 2 provided a ham, a rolled tongue, a pair of fowls, and some fruit. She undertook that pepper, salt, and white sugar should be forthcoming when wanted, and also that they should be sent in separate bottles—each one distinctly labelled.

No. 3 brought a large piece of pickled salmon, a veal-and-ham pie, four fine cucumbers, a bottle of vinegar, a bottle of oil, and some fruit. The bottles were to be well corked, and the corks securely tied down with strong twine.

No. 4—a large piece of roast beef, a pigeon pie, two fruit tarts, a bottle of mixed mustard, with the cork well tied down, a good quantity of scraped horse-radish, and some fruit.

No. 5—a pair of fowls, six lobsters, twenty-four lettuces, two large bottles of salad-dressing, securely tied down, four dozen rolls, and some fruit. The lettuces were washed, thoroughly dried, and shred before we started on the morning of the picnic; the shells of the lobsters were not cracked, because we

knew that could be done with the hammer brought with the ice.

No. 6—a quarter of lamb, a bottle of mint sauce, securely tied down, four fruit tarts, four baskets of small salad washed and dried, and some fruit.

No. 7—a pair of fowls, two cabinet puddings, three jellies, two blanc-manges, two large bottles of stewed fruit well sweetened, a dish of stewed Normandy pippins, and four tins of Devonshire cream. This lady had been intending to bring two bottles of ordinary cream, but as the Devonshire cream was sent to her by a friend at the last moment, she kindly brought it instead. The puddings, jellies, and blanc-manges she brought in the moulds, and they were turned out at the last moment.

This completes the list of provisions. If our allowance seems over-liberal, it will be explained by the fact that we expected the appetites of our friends would be sharpened by exercise and the fresh air.

We did not provide for tea. If we had done so, we should have taken four times the quantity of butter, together with cups and saucers, tea-pots, tea, bread, cakes, biscuits, and jam or marmalade. There are few places where water cannot be obtained, so it is not often necessary to take it. If there are cottages near the spot chosen for the picnic, the payment of a few pence will most likely remove all difficulty about

having it boiled. Where there are no cottages it will be necessary to take a large kettle, and light a fire.

Three-quarters of an hour before luncheon was wanted, the ladies of the committee quietly withdrew from the rest of the company, having first chosen two gentlemen who were to assist as aides-de-camp.

The cloth was spread on the grass in a shady spot, and round this were put waterproofs and shawls on which it was intended the company should seat themselves, in Oriental fashion. The luncheon was prettily laid, with a napkin, two knives, two forks, one spoon, and three plates for each guest, and before commencing operations it was announced that these were to suffice. The provisions were all laid upon the table at once, and looked very appetising. At the last moment, to our great delight, Bertha and a young friend of hers appeared with two or three large bunches of wild flowers which they had gathered for the purpose, and these, when prettily arranged in glasses, improved the appearance of the table wonderfully.

When all was ready the company were summoned, and our friends heartily enjoyed the refreshment which had been provided for them. To our great satisfaction we found that not a single article had been forgotten. Thanks to the ice, the butter was solid, and the water and wine cool and refreshing. The vinegar, cream, oil, and mustard had not escaped from their bottles,

nor the salt penetrated to the interior of the gooseberry tart. All our friends declared themselves both satisfied and delighted.

As soon as the repast was over the crockery was collected, and counted, and everything was returned to the hampers. Certainly our picnic was a great success.

A bill of fare for a picnic, as for everything else, may be varied to suit the fancy, tastes, and pockets of the guests. A few sandwiches, a little bread-and-butter, some hard-boiled eggs, and cake will be sufficient for many ; or, instead of these, a few sardines, bread-and-butter, cold meat cut in slices, and stewed fruit or similar refreshment. Thus the trouble and expense will be reduced indefinitely. At the same time it would be very foolish for a number of persons to penetrate quite into the heart of a country district, where in all probability they would be unable to buy what they wanted, without making some provision for necessary wants. Any one who has tried the two plans will know that not only is the benefit to health derived from fresh air and exercise greater when the demands of hunger and thirst are satisfied than when they are not, but they will confess also that a good dinner is no mean assistance to the true appreciation of the beauties of nature and the delights of social intercourse.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

THE WINTER EVENINGS : HOW SHALL WE SPEND  
THEM ?

ALTHOUGH every one regrets the departure of summer, and dreads the approach of winter, with its cold, its snow, its hail, its rain, its damp, and its frost, there are comparatively few in this land of bright extravagant fires, and cheerful homes, who do not rejoice at the thought of the long winter evenings. It is frankly admitted on all hands that winter days are miserable ; that the necessary walks through wet, muddy streets are detestable, but the evenings are considered to compensate for everything.

Is there any work which has been neglected during the bright days?—the winter evenings are coming. Is there any study which should be prosecuted?—the winter evenings are coming. Are there any books which we want to read, and have not yet found the required time for doing so?—the winter evenings are coming. Are there any friends whose companionship has not been enjoyed as it might have been?—the winter evenings are coming. Indeed, to hear some

people talk, it would seem as if the omissions of months were to be made up for by the industry and energy which should be displayed during the fourteen or sixteen weeks of winter.

There is ground for this feeling. How many who are utterly unable to resist the temptation of a summer evening's stroll, when they find that winter is fairly upon them, that its curtains are drawn, its fires blazing, and its quiet encompassing them, "buckle to," as the saying is, and work with a will! The acquisition of many a foreign language, the pursuit of many a valuable study, the perusal of many charming books, the contemplation of many a pile of useful household needlework all ready for use, are owing to the work done on winter evenings.

These much-vaunted evenings are once more coming upon us. And more than that, almost whilst we are occupied in realising the fact, they will be gone. Perhaps therefore two or three hints as to the surest way of taking advantage of them will not be out of place here.

I suppose we can all remember that when as children we had to do certain work, and were strongly tempted not to do it, we found it a great assistance to "set ourselves a task." "Grown-ups" would often find it worth while to copy their juniors in this, and especially so at the approach of winter. It is not

enough to make vague resolutions that you will do a great deal, that you will work hard, and that kind of thing. Set yourself a task, possible but not too easy, and do not be turned away from it by a trifle; you will be much more likely to achieve something definite than if you merely set to work to do several things, you are not quite sure what.

If you do not possess it already, why not set to work and acquire a knowledge of French, or German, or Latin, or shorthand, or drawing, or mathematics, whichever you think will be most useful to you? Only be sure of this, whatever knowledge of the kind you gain will not be thrown away. In the course of my life I have heard scores of people say they wished they knew French, but I never heard one say he was sorry he had learnt it. Ten to one, when you have gained the knowledge, something will turn up which will show that it was just the thing you wanted, and it will prove of the greatest assistance to you. Even if it should be no help to you in position, you will find the mental discipline has been most valuable. The men who have made their mark in the world are those who have possessed the power of conquering their own inclinations to idleness, and of working steadily and perseveringly to accomplish their ends.

There are so many facilities for private study for adults now-a-days that it seems quite needless for any

one to be deficient. And yet there is so much superficial knowledge. So many people have got a smattering of a language or a science, which they acquired at school, or perhaps began to study afterwards, and did not persevere. This is of no practical use to them, indeed it is rather a drawback than otherwise, because it makes them feel contented when they have no right to be so. One winter's hard work would, in all probability, perfect them in this, and the knowledge thus gained would not quickly be forgotten.

If companionship is desired, doubtless a friend could be found to join in the work, a friend who would be very grateful to the energetic associate who was the means of determining him to do what his own good sense had already recommended. It is astonishing how many men acknowledge that it is wise to study in this way, who intend to do it, who admire and respect those who carry out a similar intention, and yet who fail in the strength of will which is required to realise their dreams. One of these persons would gladly welcome the suggestion which induced them to fulfil their own good intentions.

I once had a friend who got through an amazing amount of work, and was on this account a wonder to every one who knew him. I asked him on one occasion what his secret was, as I felt sure he had one, and, after a number of modest disclaimers, he

told me that, finding he was of an idle disposition, he had made a firm resolve, and to a great extent carried it out, "never to be doing *nothing*." He confessed that the result astonished even himself. Any one who will follow his example may do great things. It is the minutes and half-hours which are frittered and dawdled away that are wasted. Time spent in taking needful rest and recreation is well spent: time spent in standing about and "lazing" is usually entirely lost.

We have all heard of the great man who owed his knowledge of three languages to the fact that he employed in studying them the minutes which he was kept waiting whilst his wife put her bonnet on. For my part, I should have admired this gentleman more if he had contented himself with two languages, and devoted the remainder of the time to looking up his "good lady," and making her mend her ways.

But though it is very desirable that something useful and worth having should be got out of the winter evenings, it must not be forgotten that enjoyment may be gained as well. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy;" and he who denies himself necessary relaxation because he is occupied in improving his mind will defeat his own ends, and merely succeed in overstraining his energies, and unfitting himself for his daily duties.

The pleasure of winter evenings is mostly con-

nected with friendly gatherings, and the delightful interchange of interest and sympathy. In summer it is difficult for a circle of friends to meet unbroken—some one is sure to be absent ; but in winter there are fewer obstacles of this kind, and evenings may be agreeably spent which will be pleasantly remembered for many a day.

It is astonishing how much may be done in this way with very little trouble and expense. Let a dozen or more friends arrange that they will meet on a particular night once a week at each other's houses ; that they will make it a rule that ordinary dress only is to be worn ; that the refreshments provided are to be limited to sandwiches and cake, with a glass of wine, or something of that sort ; and that the meetings are to break up at a certain hour ; and I dare answer for it that, having met for one winter, they will wish to repeat the experiment.

The restrictions are recommended as a safety-valve. My experience is that when friends meet together at regular intervals, and indulge in a good deal of finery, and provide sumptuous repasts, they either tire of it, or the thing degenerates into a mere occasion for display. But if they meet with the avowed and sole object of enjoying one another's society, the interest will only increase as time goes on.

These evenings may be spent in all sorts of ways,

to suit varying tastes—in music, dancing, games, discussions, recitations, charades, readings, language nights, when a particular foreign language is alone allowed to be spoken, or, to borrow ideas from our American cousins, in spelling and working “bees.” The spelling bees seem to be particularly popular at the present time across the water, and to be productive of benefit as well as fun. In these days, when the studies of young people are so numerous and diversified, it often happens that spelling forms one of the educational extras which is sadly overlooked. It was doubtless owing to the fact that so many felt their deficiency in this respect that the spelling bees were instituted. A number of friends meet at regular intervals with the avowed object of puzzling one another in spelling. It has been found again and again that after a few spelling bees the most critical proficient in orthography has been unable to discover any spelling blunders in the letters and compositions of those who attend them.

The old-fashioned working bees are too well understood to need description. When a lady finds that the amount of sewing required by the wants of her household is beyond her own powers, she holds a bee—that is to say, she calls in the assistance of her friends and neighbours, and “many hands make light work.”

Last winter, in our own little circle, we spent some very pleasant evenings. We met, as I have described, at one another's houses, and spent the time in making speeches—in this way. As soon as we were all assembled, a tray was passed round, and each person present put in a ticket, on which he had written down a subject, and these were well shaken together. Numbers one, two, three, four, five, &c., one for each, were then drawn for, and the gentleman or lady who had taken number one stood up, drew a subject, and at once commenced speaking on it. He was allowed three minutes only, and as soon as he had finished number two took his place; and this continued until all had spoken. When we first met the three minutes were found too long; but after repeated trials greater fluency was attained, though not until there had been some very amusing failures.

We constantly varied the programme of the evening. One night we had a general election, when each one present solicited the votes of the rest, and declared his views. One night we all came prepared to relate the most peculiar incident that had happened in our individual experience. On two or three occasions we chose a particular author, and each one gave an opinion of him and his works, with reasons and illustrations. Another night we had a discussion upon a paper which was read by one of our number.



Altogether we had some very interesting evenings, and we are eagerly looking forward to a repetition of them. I think one reason of their success was, that we always had something understood and arranged beforehand, so that the proceedings were not left to chance. And not the least charm lay in the fact that it afforded an opportunity for ladies and gentlemen to do something *together*, and so that breaking up of the party into small companies, which has so often been found to be unpleasant, was avoided.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## LODGERS AND LODGINGS.

HAVING lived in lodgings many years, some comfortable ones, and some quite the reverse, and having during that time made the acquaintance of many, both lodgers and lodging-house keepers, I am perhaps better able than most people to express an opinion about them. Whilst my experience has taught me that lodging-house keepers are not necessarily rapacious and greedy, it has shown me also that neither are they as a rule benevolent beings, who let apartments with the sole object of making their fellow-creatures happy. The position of mistress in a house entirely or partially occupied by lodgers is almost always a trying one, and it is very certain that the comfort or discomfort to be enjoyed or endured by those whom circumstances oblige to live in apartments may be added to or decreased quite as much by the temper and disposition of the lodger as by those of the mistress. But perhaps I had better narrate a little of my own experience.

The person with whom I first lived was named Mrs.

Jorkins. She was a widow, and was mediocre in every respect; I fancy she had a good deal of difficulty in making both ends meet, and if she occasionally swelled the bills, she had a great many temptations to do so. Her house was let to three different sets of lodgers. I had the first floor—bed-room and sitting-room; the two rooms above were taken by an old gentleman, who in the house always went by the name of the “mysterious party;” and the two rooms underneath were occupied by an ever-varying succession of young gentlemen “engaged in the City,” who were at once the life and the nuisance of the establishment.

The “mysterious party” used to consist of the “mysterious parties”—that is, of an old gentleman and his wife, who had lived in the rooms for some years, and led the quietest of lives. They had never had an acquaintance to visit them, nor received a letter or a message of any sort, since they came. They had their own furniture—very handsome furniture it was—kept their own rooms, cooked their own food, and carefully avoided the slightest acquaintance with any one in the house. They had every appearance of respectability; their rent was paid punctually, and often before it was due. It was folded in a piece of paper, and put with the things left outside the door ready for the girl to carry down, for even the servant who waited on our friends very rarely entered their

room. She used to leave whatever they required outside the door, and it was taken in after she had left. One day a carriage stopped at the house, and a doctor was ushered up-stairs. The old lady was ill. Gradually she grew worse, but her husband waited upon her exclusively, and seemed quite to resent any inquiries about her. After a few days she quietly died, then was as quietly buried, and everything went back to the old routine, excepting that the servant was now allowed to enter for half an hour each day, to perform necessary duties. Mrs. Jorkins at one time became very uneasy, as she thought what should she do if the old gentleman too were to die, while she knew none of his friends or connections; but I comforted her by saying that she might be sure such a methodical independent sort of person as he was would have made every arrangement that was right and proper, and would have left full directions as to what was to be done. Though at first we felt very curious about him, we gradually became accustomed to our quiet neighbour, and left him as unmolested as he seemed to desire. He is still going on in the same way, and looks as if he would live to be a hundred. I suppose some day the mystery about him will be cleared up. Perhaps he will turn out to be a nobleman in disguise, or an escaped convict, or—more likely than either—an old gentleman who has outlived his friends,

grown tired of the world, and desires to spend the remainder of his days in peace.

With the different young gentlemen who occupied the ground floor I was generally on very good terms. They were mostly young men who had lived in the country, and having come up to London to make their fortunes, were engaged in the City. I should think most of them had had comfortable homes, with mothers and sisters to look after them, and they seemed to find it a little hard at first to dispense with this loving care. Mrs. Jorkins' rooms were clean and comfortable, and her terms suited the purses of those who had not a very large amount of money to spend. She would let a young man have the use of a sitting-room and bed-room moderately furnished, wait on him and mend his linen, for twelve shillings a week. Then she would procure for him whatever provisions he required, keep an account of them, and make out a little bill, which was presented for payment every Monday morning. If two companions or two brothers shared the rooms, having another bed put up in the sleeping apartment, they were charged sixteen shillings a week. The weekly bills, which included washing, breakfast, tea, and supper, used to average, for one person, fourteen shillings a week. The young men were supposed to dine out; if they were at home on Sunday (and they

never were when they could help it), they had dinner with the family, and paid one shilling and threepence each for the meal.

The items of the weekly bill were a frequent subject of dispute, and though Mrs. Jorkins' lodgers were not unfairly treated, I am convinced, from the accounts I have heard, that numbers of young men in their position have a great deal to put up with. Everybody knows that there are landladies and landladies, and lodgers and lodgers, and I suppose it is very much a question of luck whether or not a decent lodging is obtained on reasonable terms ; but certainly if a young fellow inexperienced and open-hearted falls into the hands of an unprincipled and rapacious person, he has a very hard time of it. Becoming intimate as I did with my fellow-lodgers and their friends, I heard many an account of extortion and imposition which made me exceedingly indignant, and I always advised those who were subjected to these things not to put up with them. The best way is, as soon as there is the slightest suspicion of unfair dealing, first to be quite sure that there is a foundation for the suspicion, and then to speak about it at once ; and if it is repeated, change apartments. There are hundreds of decent, respectable lodging-house keepers in a large town or city, who may be found with a little trouble, and it is no use putting up with discomfort and annoyance.

At the same time it is most important to remember that young men very frequently lay themselves open to small robberies, by leaving money and various articles of jewellery lying about their rooms, and so place temptation in the way of ignorant servants, who have perhaps never been taught to withstand it. I consider gentlemen have no right to do this. It is unfair to the poor girls who wait upon them, and if they lose anything in this way they deserve it.

The same thing may be said about wine and spirits. When they have been used, before the room is left, the bottles containing them ought to be locked up.

At one time Mrs. Jorkins had a young medical student lodging with her, who fancied that his whiskey went more quickly than his own consumption of it justified ; and in order to discover the culprit, he mixed a little of it with a strong colourless emetic, and left the mixture on the table as he had been accustomed to leave the whiskey.

The next day the unfortunate servant was scarcely able to hold up her head, and the young man amused his friends with his account of the sympathetic kindness with which he recommended her to take a little whiskey as a restorative, and the abhorrence with which she rejected his advice.

I could not but feel that he was wrong, and that he ought not to have left such a temptation in the way

of a girl who came up-stairs tired after a hard day's work, and therefore was peculiarly liable to fall into an error of this sort.

Several of my acquaintances who could not meet with comfortable lodgings I sent to Smith's, and one young man in particular told me the other day that he had been there for six years, and would not again live in ordinary apartments on any account.

For the benefit of those who have not met with establishments like the one of which I speak, I may as well describe this one, especially as, if the demand for such lodgings were greater, the supply would increase.

In a large house, in a thoroughly respectable neighbourhood, off one of the well-known squares in London, accommodation is provided for twenty-five or thirty gentlemen. They are charged for lodging six, eight, or ten shillings per week, according as they occupy the first, second, or third floor.

Each floor consists of one large room only, with partitions about six feet in height, which divide it into a number of separate bed-rooms, one for each gentleman. These bed-rooms are plainly but comfortably furnished, and as the division does not reach to the top of the room, they are always airy and well ventilated. The living-rooms are spacious, comfortable, and handsome; and in winter they are well warmed



and brilliantly lighted ; and if one of the lodgers feels inclined at any time to spend the evening in-doors, he is almost sure to meet with respectable, gentlemanly companions ; and he can smoke, play chess, read, or spend his time as he pleases.

The meals are taken at a large table, something like a sideboard, with a locker, and a private lock and key, for each gentleman, in which he can keep what provisions he chooses for his own use ; or, if he prefer it, he can order what he wants.

These rooms are not liked by all, on account of the hours—the doors are closed at eleven. If a gentleman wishes occasionally to come in later, he can arrange with the hall-porter to sit up for him ; but as a general thing, if a lodger does not conform to the rules of the house, he is politely requested to go somewhere else.

For steady, respectable gentlemen, who wish for comfort and a certain amount of elegance, combined with economy, and agreeable companionship, I do not know any private lodgings which are to be compared to these ; and I certainly would recommend those young men who have been unable to meet with comfortable apartments to try such an establishment.

There is one conclusion that I have come to with regard to young men who live in lodgings, which I must not omit to mention—namely, if they are not

careful, they are just as likely to suffer from their friends as from their landladies. I have noticed this again and again. Young men come up from the country, make a few acquaintances, and hospitably invite them to their rooms, give them of their best, and press them to come again. In a little while the experienced friends, being sure of a welcome, and (shall I say it?) of a supper, get into the way of calling in at regular intervals without invitation, until the host is drawn into expenses which he had never calculated upon, and is often quite unable to afford. The only way in a case of this sort is to be determined to keep straight. A young man who has inadvertently allowed himself to be drawn into a difficulty like this ought to speak out boldly, as a friend of mine did on one occasion.

A number of young men, who belonged to the same cricket-club that he did, got into the way of dropping in to see him three or four nights a week, and after sitting half an hour, they would say, "Give us a little supper, my boy;" and he would hospitably order the best he could for them, until he found that his weekly bills were increasing considerably.

One night, when four or five friends had come in, in the usual way, he said to them—

"Look here, old fellows, I am not rich; I have my way to make, and I cannot afford to find you in suppers, so you had better understand that when you

come in here you shall have a hearty welcome, with bread, cheese, and cold water."

The visitors decreased in number, but I do not think the young man was any the less respected for the stand he had taken.

"Our young gentlemen," as Mrs. Jorkins always called them, did queer things sometimes. One of them used to open the door with his latch-key, and leave the key in the door, and we were roused three or four times in the dead of the night by the policeman coming in to tell us of it, and very thankful we were that it was no worse. The same young man, who shared his room with a friend, was such a sound sleeper that it was almost impossible to wake him.

One night he had gone to bed before his companion, and locked the door on the inside, and when his friend wanted to come in he could not rouse him. He knocked and shouted, and made such a noise, that at last all the people in the house collected on the spot, and it was decided to burst open the door, as it was feared that he must be ill. No; he was sleeping as comfortably as possible, and when he was touched, woke instantly. When told of the alarm he had caused, he calmly remarked, "Ah! I have not as much on my conscience as some people."

One lodger invited a dozen friends to dine with him one Christmas Day, and then forgetting all about

it, went out to dinner himself. Soon the company began to arrive, evidently prepared to spend a happy day; but after waiting a considerable time, they were obliged to return home, as no preparations had been made for their reception, and they were evidently not expected.

In these days, when there are numbers of well-educated women placed in such circumstances that they must do something to earn their own livelihood, I cannot but think it would be well if, instead of taking situations as second-rate governesses, as so many of them do, these ladies would consider the advisability of themselves letting apartments, and taking lodgers, if such a course is practicable. I say this in the face of a fact which came to my notice the other day. A friend of mine advertised in one of the daily papers for apartments, and received in reply no fewer than ninety-two answers—all, of course, from the regular class of lodging-house keepers. What is wanted, in my opinion, is that lodgings should be let by a superior class of persons. If there were a little more refinement and education amongst lodging-house keepers, lodgings would not be so universally decried as they are, nor would lodgers be considered unfortunate and miserable persons. Both parties would benefit by the change, for were it understood that the nominal cost of apartments was the real cost, many would be willing

to pay at a higher rate than they can possibly do now, when they are in too many instances obliged to calculate upon a certain degree of extortion.

THE END.



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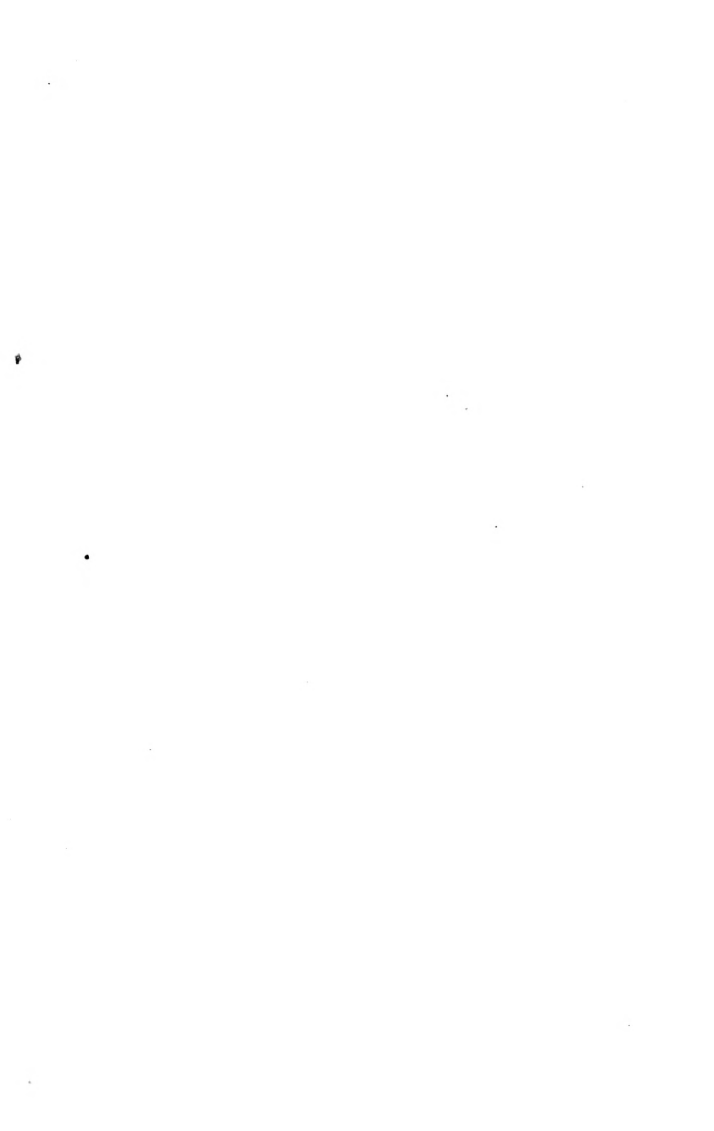
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