

O sweet fair face! O pensive eyes,  
 In which the gleaming love-light lies!  
 I've sought you long;  
 And now the world grows very bright,  
 Full of a new and radiant light,  
 Rippling with song.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Cheeks glowing o'er with sunny flush!  
 Face mantling with a crimson blush!  
 Lips roy red!

Sweet eyes that droop beneath each lid,  
 Then trustful glance, no longer hid,  
 All shyness fled.

O sweet fair face! O pensive eyes,  
 In which the gleaming love-light lies!  
 I've sought you long;  
 And now the world is very bright,  
 Full of a new and radiant light,  
 Rippling with song.

G. W.

## ON THE ART OF MAKING HOME LIFE HAPPY.



WHEN I was five-and-thirty, I married a widower with a family of twelve children, then growing up.

I was an only child, and there was a great deal of opposition in my family to the marriage, on account of the burden

it was considered that I should thereby be taking upon my shoulders. From our first acquaintance I have always been passionately attached to my husband, and I devoted the time taken up before my parents yielded their consent in endeavouring to learn how I could make our future home happy. The task was no easy one, and I was quite sensible of its difficulties. Having had no brothers and sisters, and few relations, I knew very little of the bringing up of children. Being, however, no longer a girl, but a woman of some knowledge and experience, I resolved to profit by the failures I had seen in other homes, and try if I could do something better.

I think, without self-delusion, I may say I have succeeded. Our boys are well established in life, there is not a black sheep among them; and our girls are marrying well, making useful, ladylike wives, and happy, contented women: so perhaps you will bear with me while I tell you a little about the principles on which I acted—premising what I have to say by owning that success did not come all at once, but followed on innumerable failures, which gave me

many a heartache at the time, and sometimes very nearly drove me to despair. I am quite sure they would have done so utterly, had it not been for the sympathy and affection of my husband, who, although he did not always think as I did, and sometimes embarrassed me extremely by what seemed to me at the time an unreasonable exercise of authority (a way which I find is not peculiar to him, but shared with the best of men), was in reality one with me in tastes, principles, and feelings.

My first object was to bring all the machinery of the household into a methodical system; slipshod housekeeping may be endurable in a small family, but it is impracticable in large houses if the mistress purposes to be anything but a mere upper servant. The easiest means to carry this out seemed to me early rising. I set apart for each day some special domestic duty, such as giving out the stores, looking through the house-linen, balancing accounts, and other similar items. We breakfasted at eight o'clock from the first, to enable the boys, who were then day-boarders at one of the large London colleges, to be in time; and I gave my orders in the kitchen punctually at nine, so that by eleven o'clock I found I had put down the daily expenses, written the necessary notes which occur everywhere, and had so disposed of the housewifely cares—viz., those appertaining solely to housekeeping—for the day; leaving my hands and my mind free for other duties. A mistress of a large family must, as a matter of necessity, if she fulfils her mission well, always be thinking of other people, and has but little time for selfish cares and worries. I am quite sure that, insensibly as well as knowingly, a mistress of a household gives the whole tone to the kingdom of home over which she rules, and that therefore cheerfulness and mental cultivation are most essential in her.

We have during our married life been neither rich nor poor—merely sufficiently well off to be able to pay our way comfortably, and to make any lavish expenditure a sin. Waste of either time, materials, or money I have combated with all my energies.

In my maiden days I had mixed a great deal in London society, and I did not feel inclined, nor did my husband wish me, to relinquish my friends; therefore in the plan of my life I did not exclude social duties. I had no inclination for the late hours



that balls entailed, until the girls grew up; but we saw as much of our friends as other people, and what I most encouraged was sociability.

Before I married I had been painfully impressed with the dismal dulness of middle-class domestic life. Pleasant manners, lively conversation, and neat dresses seemed far too often reserved for company, morose dulness and personal slovenliness for home, and this more especially where those banes of modern days held sway, viz., keeping up appearances and pushing forward in the social scale.

My great object was to make the children useful, helpful, and happy, and in bringing this about I did not find it necessary to upset the order or refinement of my home. As they grew up I set them an example, which they followed, of appearing at the dinner-table suitably dressed, and the evening was devoted to amusements and social enjoyments, in which my husband and I took part. I encouraged the boys and the girls alike to invite their companions to join our family circle. We lived plainly and well, banishing all affectation of being better, richer, or grander than we were. I strove to make the plan of our daily life an orderly and refined one, and being so, one or two additions to our number could always be made without fuss or preparation. It took much time and trouble to bring this easy, comfortable routine about, but it was richly rewarded. The boys found the evenings at home as pleasant as any they got out, and consequently were content to stay at home as the rule and go out as the exception. The girls married happily, because the husbands whom they chose, and who chose them, had had an opportunity of seeing them in everyday life, and not in the false glamour of society, where conversation nine times in ten dwindles to purposeless inanities, and both time and beauty are wasted in an aimless rush after excitement. I do not wish to intimate that we never appeared where other people go, but we were not to be seen everywhere, and where we did go we found pleasure and enjoyment instead of *ennui* and disappointment, not having a plethora of such things.

I devoted much time and attention to the *physique* of the girls and boys, and strongly encouraged outdoor exercises and amusements. Calisthenics, gymnastics, skating, croquet, lawn-tennis, riding (when practicable), and walking I did my best to promote; and the fun and laughter emanating from a merry party of hearty, healthy young people enjoying outdoor games rings in my ears yet.

Having married somewhat late in life, I had had more time to devote to accomplishments than most people, and had cultivated a decided taste both for music and drawing. I was fully alive to the advantages of both these arts, encouraging them in the children in so far as they showed a taste for them, but only so far; and some gave evidence for a talent for one thing, some for another. Our winter evenings passed merrily with glees, duets, and solos, both vocal and instrumental, round games, chess and whist not being neglected, but whenever it was practicable we had some book in hand for reading aloud, a prac-

tice to which I attribute not only a great love of reading and books in the family, but a liking for work too, for we plied our needles as we listened. My husband is a man of unusual mental powers, and he necessarily raised the tone of our interests and pursuits, making it a matter of duty that our children should be up in the topics of the day, and take a rational and intellectual interest in them. The "higher education of women" was one of the many themes which he and I frequently discussed without ever agreeing very thoroughly, for though I attach the greatest importance to education, I consider that its chief object is to fit the person educated for the special duties of their lot. Women as wives, mothers, and sisters, exercising as they do an immense and untold influence on the other sex, require that all their powers should be highly trained; but a thorough knowledge of such things as come peculiarly within their province I consider of most importance, and though I did my best that our girls should have their minds so trained that as circumstances arose they were able to follow any particular bent, and their power of reasoning was so enlarged that they were not inclined to waste their energies on trivialities, I strove first of all to make them happy, lovable, loving women, with healthy instincts and aspirations, and moreover well versed in womanly arts. As they grew up, they each took a portion of the housekeeping, and learnt the rudiments of cooking, as well as the art of practical dress-making. At eighteen they each had an allowance for dress, which taught them a little the value and capabilities of money. Not being by any means above small vanities, I have instilled into their minds what I have always felt myself, that it is certainly the duty of our sex to make the best of our personal advantages, by honest means, mind you, not with rouge paint and hair-dye, which lend a fictitious fairness, not always beauty.

I hope I have not wearied you with this selfish family-history. I have just been reading the life of Lord Macaulay, and I think it was the forcible manner in which the happiness and healthiness of the family life he enjoyed were described, that made me feel—seeing what desirable results that early training had wrought in him, with whom family ties and affections were stronger than with most of us—anything which would tend to diffuse such happy homes would be of use; and I desire to call attention to one sentence in the volume which contains the whole pith and marrow of home education, to my thinking:—

"Charity is not the only quality which begins at home. It is throwing away money to spend a thousand a year on the teaching of three boys, if they are to return from school only to find the older members of their family intent on amusing themselves at any cost of time and trouble, or sacrificing self-respect in ignoble efforts to struggle into a social grade above their own. The child will never place his aims high, and pursue them steadily, unless the parent has taught him what energy and elevation of purpose mean, not less by example than by precept."

ARDERN HOLT.