

And, her heart too full to speak without committing herself, which pride prevented when she remembered that this niece had been conniving to deceive her, she went in-doors, up into her own room, of which she locked the door, and then indulged in the luxury of a tempestuous burst of tears.

For more than an hour she remained there, sobbing and composing herself by turns, till at last she heard voices under the window. Carefully concealing herself, she peeped from behind the curtain.

There they were, all three talking and laughing, a "woke-up" look on Arthur's face which she had not seen there for months.

It was strange, very strange; and as she stood and watched them, she could not make up her mind whether she had or had not made a mistake in asking these people to come. After all, if his love for Agatha saved Arthur from despondency, and made a man of him, she ought to consider her object gained.

Anyway, she made up her mind to be silent for the present, and take notes; and so deciding, she washed her face, smoothed her silvering hair, set her cap daintily on her head, and went down-stairs, where the luncheon was decidedly far more cheery than the dinner had been on the previous evening.

And the days passed on—life at the Cottage seemed very bright to all but its mistress, who could not reconcile herself to the fact that she had been deceived; not even though it gladdened her heart to hear Arthur laughing merrily, as he sometimes did at his cousin's sallies, or to see him take an interest he never took before in the farm and its workings.

Agatha's pale beautiful face would come between the mother and the change her presence seemed to have effected, and Lady Best felt that she could never love Agatha, even though Arthur's whole happiness was centred in her.

But if she had lost a son she had gained a daughter, for, appreciating Hannah's merits as she did to the fullest, she felt that she was each day learning to love her more and more. Many times was it on her lips to tell her how grieved she was at the direction Arthur's fancy seemed to have taken, but pride held her back.

At last, almost before they could believe in its approach, St. Partridge arrived, and with it a letter from Mr. Milton, saying he should be back in less than a week, that he would take the Cottage on his way, see his sister, and escort his daughter home.

What tears and heart-burnings did this letter

produce! Hannah was evidently in despair at leaving the Cottage. Arthur became as despondent as he was two months ago; only Agatha seemed to have no regret.

"Of course not, since she expects to stay here always; not with me, though. She will not live here with me," raged Lady Best to herself.

And in this mood Arthur found her one morning, when he sought her in the little morning-room she called her den.

He broke the ice without any preliminary skating over it.

"Mother, will it not be a pleasure to you if I bring you a daughter to welcome?"

"Oh, Arthur, if you only knew how I have dreaded this question!"

"Dreaded it, mother? I thought you would be delighted."

"How could you? A penniless, lackadaisical, intriguing"—the rest of her sentence was a sob, interrupted, however, by an exclamation from Arthur.

"Penniless—Hannah? Why, her only fault in my eyes is that she has money, and my uncle may think——"

"Hannah! You don't mean to say it is Hannah you love? Oh, you dear Arthur—my own boy!"

"You did not think it was Agatha? Why, she has been engaged to my old college chum, Laurence Wilmot, for the last year. They had a little breeze just before she came here, which I had the pleasure of making up. I could not tell you because the whole thing was a secret on account of his uncle. The old gentleman, however, has given in, and they are to be married very soon."

Lady Best soon forgot all her anxiety and the unhappiness of the last few weeks in her present joy; and of course she promised to negotiate matters with Mr. Milton when he should arrive, and she did so most effectually, for he seemed as pleased as she was; and from the day that the marriage was finally settled, she began to unbend and find a place for Agatha in her capacious heart, showering upon the girl—in very gratitude for finding that her love for Arthur was all a mistake—as many kindnesses and presents as she bestowed on her well-beloved Hannah.

And when, at last, the two marriages took place at Milton Hall on the same day, the uninitiated would almost have thought that Lady Best was the mother of both the brides.

DOMESTIC TRAINING FOR GIRLS.

BY MRS. WARREN. IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.



YOUNG daughter in training for house management must, if work is to be satisfactorily done, overlook the laying of the breakfast-table, or must do it herself: the knives and silver must be bright, the glass clear, and every-

thing set straight on the table; not the handle of one knife or fork projecting in advance of its neighbour, or so near the edge of the table that the first passer-by sets them awry. A knife, fork, serviette, and breakfast-plate before each person's seat; extra plates on each side of the table; the salt fine, dry, and smooth; the

salt-spoons and casters bright, and the latter properly filled; a bread-plate and knife; another plate for cut bread, and a fork by its side; two butter-dishes, each with a knife by its side, or one as may be needed; the cups, saucers, and basin bright and without smears; the tea-spoons and tea-pot well washed, polished, and without smears; the table-cloth uncreased from its having been, when put away, folded in the same folds as it came from the laundress; a chair placed straight before each person's plate; the tea and coffee made with boiling water—both can be kept hot under a cosy. If bacon is ordered for breakfast, she should see that it is done according to the fancy of the people who are to eat it, neither burned nor greasy; if to be crisped, it should be dried on paper before dishing it on a hot dish; and if to be served with the bacon-dripping, a china drainer should be placed under the bacon, so that the fat which runs through may be served from the dish; if bacon is kept in fat it will not be pleasant to eat. Toast must be crisp and equally toasted; each piece, of a golden brown, should be stood upright with a fork run through it and on a plate, for if put into the toast-rack while hot, each slice steams against the other and renders it soft and soddened.

Eggs should be washed in cold water before cooking them, if they are not perfectly clean when put into the saucepan, and each should also be held over the steam for a minute, or if not quite fresh they will crack when the boiling water touches them. When eggs are doubtful as to quality they should be put into cold water and quickly cooked; when they boil they are done, unless required to be hard, and then are cooked a longer time.

Cold meat should be served on a spotlessly clean dish, with sprays of parsley or water-cress round the meat, not on it. Wash both or either in hotter than tepid water, and a small portion at a time, and instantly throw it into cold water, and thus the insects, worms, dirt, and sand are quickly dislodged and fall to the bottom of the water. It is worse than useless washing any vegetable in cold water only, even if salt be added, as the latter semi-kills insects and snails, but also makes them exude a gummy slime and stick the harder to the greenery.

There are many other things usually served at a breakfast-table, but the whole matter requires to be done by delicate handling oneself, or by a very sharp supervision of a young servant.

After the breakfast is served, and if a servant waits, she should be taught to put down plates and cups on the left side of the person for whom they are intended, but she may take away either on the left or right as most convenient.

After the breakfast the silver and knives should be washed and wiped without delay, and should not for this purpose be taken to the kitchen. Further than this the breakfast-things can remain unwashed till the bed-rooms have been attended to. It is most essential to house-training that a young girl assists with the beds, and setting the rooms in order. The windows should be thrown open, the clothes stripped from the beds; and if there are mattresses, these are to be turned;

and during the time of this airing, all the necessary water arrangements should be done, baths emptied, &c. &c., but no water-jugs filled: this is the latest work after bed-making, sweeping, and dusting. It is a good plan to have dust-wrappers placed over the wash-stands and toilette-tables, and a wrapper over each bed after it is made, and during the necessary cleaning, be it slight or thorough. A mother should show her daughter how to shake a bed properly, how to tuck in the clothes securely, and finally how to make it "plump." Servants shake the feathers from side to side, never divide the lumps by rubbing them; these lumps are sure to collect in a badly-made bed, and the feathers will not spread evenly. The blankets and sheets should be tucked in at the sides, and particularly so at the foot of the bedstead; careless bed-makers leave the upper bed-clothes untucked at the foot of the bed, to the misery of the occupiers at night.

One can scarcely direct in a limited paper how the various duties even of one day are to be done, but without order, punctuality, and certain work done within a given time, and this daily recurrent, no efficient training can result. Unless there be an innate love of order, neatness, and thoughtful provision in mistress or maid, a well-ordered household is impossible, and where one of these is found there exist ten of the happy-go-lucky species.

The management of a household may be divided into four sections:—first, the general ordering of the work of a house; secondly, the careful supervision of linen of all kinds; thirdly, a knowledge of cookery and methods of serving meals also, that meals may not only be served well cooked, but neatly and ornamentally; and fourthly, a daily supervision over the assistants in daily work.

A mistress often complains of the trouble of over-seeing one or more servants, and that they cannot be trusted to do their work without this over-seeing. She forgets or is ignorant of the fact that no work is without an overlooker. A man walks about watching masons building a house, he does not work with his hands but with his eyes; a shop-walker the same; in every factory there are overseers. And in every house the eyes of a mistress should indeed do more work than her hands if she employ servants; and what is a universal and compulsory practice need not be a hardship.

There is perhaps not so much science in managing work, as there is in spending a weekly or yearly income. And this is the first trouble in household matters of a young inexperienced wife, who knows not how far money will go. And in this matter a peasant girl is generally as ignorant as one of a higher rank. We constantly see questions asked, "How much ought I to spend on different items of housekeeping and servants, with such-and-such an income?" The answer to this foolish question must be unsatisfactory. How can any one ignorant of a stranger's habits give a reliable estimate of expenses?

To young people who know not the value of money, £200 a year represents comfort, but reduce this to its daily proportions and 10s. 11½d. is the result. Rent,

taxes, clothes, laundress, food, drink, fire, railway fare, and the numberless insidious sundries which swallow up the pennies in no time, are to come out of this 10s. 11½d. a day. It requires good management to keep up appearances upon £200 a year. We are assuming the recipient to be of the respectable middle class. To spend this sum to the best advantage, and save a trifle, a good knowledge is needful of the most economical joints of butcher's meat, and how to cook the meat, and the plentiful supply of vegetables which go so far to eke out a dinner. Very little meat is really needful for health, but it is wonderful how much comfort and nourishment can be got out of good vegetables and well-made gravy from the joint, whether large or small, which serves for dinner. With so small a sum as 10s. 11½d. a day, a shilling is all that should be spent on meat, or 1s. 6d. with vegetables. And there should be no question of liking or disliking. Fish is often cheap, and delicious when properly cooked, which can be done without extravagant materials, if only a girl knows "how to do it." Soup of various kinds costs very little, but then again, one must know how to make it good, palatable, nourishing, and inexpensive. Still it is possible to be done daily, and what is daily done shortly becomes a pleasure to do and to improve upon.

Even with £300 a year, the daily income is but 16s. 5½d. If the value of money were a little more understood by the "merry maids of England," there would be less of "marrying and giving in marriage." Men are generally good accountants, and many of them know quite well the value of fractions as regards their £300 or £400 a year salary. Say the last—a net 22s. a day—how very little comfort can be got out of it with a wife who is ignorant of any details of housekeeping, who does not know the name of one joint from another, or scarcely one kind of food from another! Such an one is a syren, she can attract wonderfully—play, sing, sketch, paint to perfection—and she may also make her own clothes, but, excepting the latter, wherein is the home comfort?

It is unsatisfactory and to be deplored that we have in our ignorance distanced the wise knowledge of our foremothers, and have arrived at the terminus of "Know-Nothing." How to sew, darn, mend, cut out garments, and keep linen in good order—the whole is a mystery, and to cook properly is even a greater mystery.

What is known by girls of the minor ailments of children, and how to treat them?—things that years ago formed part of a girl's domestic education.

As to cookery, the aptness to make much appetising food out of inexpensive ingredients; how to prevent dyspepsia (indigestion), and, having the agony, how to ease or remedy it; and when the appetite fails from weakness, how to restore it, not by pandering to sickly fancies, but by simple means. From babyhood knowledge of different kinds can be acquired without verbal teaching, only by seeing and hearing how things are done and managed.

The domestic training of a girl should not vary with her position, for all things that are necessary to be

learned make the comfort of others and the pleasure of ourselves. Peasants' children, and all children below the highest aristocracy, should be taught alike. There is no household work such that a girl should deem it beneath her position to *know* how to do it. To scour, scrub, clean saucepans, blacklead and clean grates, to black shoes, to clean windows, knives, plate, and to wash and iron, and fold for the mangle, brew and bake. For in this way only can she teach others, and she will find comfort beyond expression in this knowledge. Whether her destiny lies in the old country or in the colonies, her knowledge of home matters will be the greatest of blessings to herself and to others.

All this is by no means incompatible with accomplishments of every kind, for by these in action a home is made bright, cheerful, and attractive, but the foundation of domestic management must be well laid at first.

A girl should recollect that in courting times she was on her best behaviour, smiling, busy, gay, good-tempered, and herself solicitous that her lover-guest should be served becomingly and attractively. Then let her train herself to be equally fascinating when she is married.

The value of money, a knowledge of how to manage it, how to apportion it so as to keep out of debt, and how to save are the first lessons in housekeeping. Other domestic matters are based upon a knowledge of accounts. A girl should be early trained to learn and remember domestic arithmetic to a complete knowledge of the four first rules in application to bills of parcels, to weights and measures, and to the tare weight, also what number of fluid ounces constitute a pint and the like. Bills require to be gone over, and the correctness tested of each article charged for. In weights and measures, she should know the difference between a stone weight as applied to her own or other human weight, which is fourteen pounds, and the weight of a stone of butcher's meat, which is eight pounds, while a stone of butter is sixteen pounds. And as to the "tare" of an article, a housewife could not make her preserves and jellies without this knowledge. The weight of a jug or other vessel intended to hold unsweetened preserve is first ascertained, and the weight written down. Then, having poured the syrup or preserve into the jug, the latter is again weighed, and the difference of the weight of the jug is subtracted from the greater weight, and this is termed the "tare," or deduction from the whole weight, and upon this deduction the requisite amount of sugar is calculated.

A great muddle arises in a household from unchecked bills, when from circumstances they are allowed to stand long for payment. And a very serious cause of trouble is carelessness in filing receipts. A very little child may be trained to seeing the necessity of not being called upon to pay the same bill twice, but if the receipt is not forthcoming this is certain to be the case. Consequently, a knowledge of arithmetic and orderly habits are among the first elements of training to become a good housewife.

Much more could be said on the domestic training of girls if this article were not limited to space.