

off the top, and swept his fingers over the keys, amusing himself by watching the mechanism. Little Charlie, standing on his tip-toes, grasped the base of the keyboard with his chubby hands, and shouted with glee,

"O, sissie! sissie! see 'ittle hammers doing up and down."

"Go away!" yelled the father, savagely. Charlie shrunk back, taking refuge under "sissie's" apron. George went on adjusting the key-board, adding a bit of dilapidated works, and occasionally torturing sounds from this wheezy representative of a past age. Little Charlie's curiosity got the better of his fears, and again his bright wondering face was just above the level of the key-board, as he eagerly watched "de 'ittle hammers."

"Get out!" roared the father, and suiting the action to the word, he planted a blow direct in the child's upturned face. His terrified screams resounded through the house as the blood spurted from his nose.

"O, darling little brother!" shrieked Mary, winding her arms about his neck. The mother, in alarm, came rushing in from the dining-room, where she had been arranging the table for dinner. The sight of her children so cruelly treated, made her brain reel and all the room grow dark.

Some two hours later, the unhappy wife sat in her dimly-lighted room beside the little beds, where, after the domestic storm, the children lay quietly. Soothed and comforted by mother, they had forgotten their troubles in the sweet sleep of innocence. But the mother! O that the sleep of forgetfulness might come to such sufferers and numb their keen sense of misery and helplessness.

With head drooping on her breast, and hands hanging listlessly, her attitude was one of utter despondency. In the expressive face were the signs of restless thought, and the lips were so tightly compressed that all the features seemed sharpened. For her, henceforth there could be no more self-delusion; the power to idealize an unworthy companion was gone. He whom she had chosen above all others, he who had vowed to love and cherish her until death, he stood unmasked before her in all his selfishness and brutality.

Many incidents in her married life that had been glossed over by her own charitable spirit, covered from sight as blossoms cover the

unsightly thorn-bush, were now stripped bare, and stood out in all their naked deformity. O, how she longed to fly away from his cruelty and oppression. But where could she fly with the little ones? She had not a cent, and was completely in the power of a mean tyrant who had from time to time, under one pretext or another, succeeded in getting the last of all that she possessed. Then an accusing conscience arose, and taunted her for not protecting the rights of the children. For why had she given to the father that which should have been sacredly preserved for the children? All this had come of her blind confidence and trust. Ah! that was the cruelest thought of all. At times, in some hours of life are crowded so much of anguish, that we seem to live years; yes, to become aged in a brief space. So it was with this unloved wife, and out of all this agony and travail was born a sublime self-sacrificing spirit that should henceforth shield those innocent ones; a love so pure and strong, that should, as far as possible, stand for that of father and mother, a type of the divine love.

And where was he, the father, so recreant of all the sacred duties and obligations of his position? Flying from the tempest his own evil passions had called up, away he went, slamming the door behind him, and off to his club. He had no qualms of conscience for having used up her money; the two hundred was all expended. He had paid thirty dollars for the old piano, bought himself a new spring suit, and that night was to give a supper to a few friends at Delmonico's. Ah! tender, loving wife, duped by the very strength of your affection, this was only one of the many dark hours that were yours before your heart was broken, and your sunny head laid low.

WHY SO SAD?

THE Winter months are passing,
And Spring will soon appear,
With sunshine, birds and blossoms,
The sweetest of the year.

THE time when Nature's children
Awake from languid care;
And canst thou be unhappy,
When all is bright and fair?

AH, no! such thoughts are painful;
And far too sad to last;
Blight not the joyous present,
By pining o'er the past.

THE future lies before thee,
Replete with Hope and Love;
And pathways bright and sunny,
Which lead to peace above.

C. H. LATHROP.

TALKS WITH WOMEN. OUR HOUSE. LETTERS TO A YOUNG WIFE.

BY JENNIE JUNE.

THE STORE-ROOM.



HOUSE is not a house without a store-room. It may have a gorgeous parlor, never opened except for company; it may have a library stocked with elegantly bound books, and cabinet full of curiosities, but if it have not a store-room it is not a hospitable house. Do not think because potted meats, and spiced fish, and jellies, and preserves can be bought as readily as sugar and tea and coffee, that there is no necessity for a store-room. Even if you can afford to buy these articles at the prices you must pay for them in this way, you will still find comfort, pleasure, and economy in having them on hand, purchased by the quantity, and ready in cases of emergency.

The store-room is, or should be, the treasury of a house, and the pride of its mistress; it is from this garnered store that she draws her supplies in all those cases of sudden need which occur in neighborhoods and families, and it is also the safe receptacle of the choicer dainties required for *fêtes* and holidays, birthdays and festivals, which lose half their rarity, if they do not burst upon young and old as some sort of a surprise.

Moreover, though it is possible to buy delicacies, yet it is not always possible to buy the delicacy you want, prepared in the manner you prefer, or to which you have become accustomed. Half the pleasure of a house, or home of your own, consists in being able to gratify your special tastes and preferences, and those of your immediate family; and the wife who does not make a study of this branch of domestic science, neglects a very potent influence in the creation and preservation of the health and happiness of a household.

The store-room, then, is a very important point in the construction of our house. It must be spacious, with wide shelves extending round three sides of the room; it must be cool, shaded, two steps down; if possible, from the rest of the house, well walled

and cemented and perfectly dry. I never saw but one store-room in a private house that fulfilled all these conditions, and this belonged to an unpretending cottage in a village in Massachusetts. It was a house which did not require an architect to plan, or a fortune to live in, yet what a cosy, convenient, pleasant house it was!

I fell in love with it on my first arrival; it was not the house we (brother and self—he was the newly-installed congregationalist minister of the place) were to occupy, but we passed it on taking our first evening walk through the village, and I said, "There is our house," and by a singular piece of good fortune, for no one ever died or moved in that village, it became "our house" before three months had passed.

There was nothing peculiar about it; thousands exist to-day, just like it, all over New England; but to me it always had a great charm, and it witnessed my first real attempt at housekeeping. There was a square porch in the center, the door of which opened upon a square entry (we did not call it a "hall"), with doors leading to the dining-room, on one side, and the sitting-room, on the other—we had no parlor. At the back was the kitchen with yellow-painted floor, at one end of it was a sleeping room (my room), the windows of which, as well as the kitchen, looked out upon the garden and were covered with roses and honeysuckle, and at the other, two steps down, the famous store-room. One broad, low flight of painted stairs led to the second floor, which was divided into "study," sleeping and lumber-rooms. This was all there was of it, except a pantry and the woodshed. But the store-room was my comfort and delight. Everything "kept" in it so well, and housekeepers, in the country, who make their own jellies, and pies, and cake, and bread; who have no refrigerator for butter, or fruit, or milk, and only see the butcher three times a week, will understand all the satisfaction involved in that word. It had only one small window, secured by a Venetian shutter, and was so well shaded by clumps of wild rose-bushes and a great butter-nut tree, that it admitted just enough of air and light; it was, therefore, always open, and the temperature, on a warm summer's day, cool and sweet as the heart of a fragrant rose. How proud I was when my grape jelly turned out so well

that the deacon's wife sent for the "receipt," which I could not give her, because I had no receipt—it was one of those blessed "happenings" which sometimes come to encourage the inexperienced.

But to return to the general subject. It should be understood, to begin with, that the possession, care, and general management of a store-room involves the exercise of some of the old-fashioned virtues. A store-room that is allowed to run itself, or is even cared for by Bridget, had better be kept, as so many store-rooms in New York are, on a shelf at the grocery.

Not that care and possession should degenerate into selfishness, stinginess, and appropriation. I remember one store-room where the mistress of the house kept everything eatable, except bread, under lock and key, and only doled out the smallest quantities under compulsion. Dainties never became the property of the family until they had become uneatable, rotten, mouldy, or, in some way defective. This is the instinct of the miser and the thief, though it is a species of dishonesty not amenable to law. None the less household stores belong to the family to be used for their comfort, and are held in trust only by the mistress of the house, to be distributed according to her wisdom and judgment, not according to her selfishness or caprice.

A store-room in the city is necessarily different from a store-room in the country. The latter depends for its supplies very much upon the forethought, the industry, the capacity which presides over it; the former, on the contrary, is more a question of money—if that is forthcoming at stated times, to purchase "stock," it is not worth while, in a limited household, to occupy space and embarrass the regularly recurring work of every day, with small amateur efforts at pickling, and canning, and potting, and preserving.

But in the country there is more space and time; there are resources of garden or farm to be utilized. There is less money, but abundant opportunities to make what in cities costs a great deal of money, or perhaps in the same form cannot be purchased at all. For, though one can purchase excellent canned peaches, yet canned peaches with the kernels put in cannot be found; although the kernels possess a valuable medicinal quality, and greatly enhance the

fineness of flavor. The reason is, that the stones have to be cracked to get at the kernels, and, therefore, more labor is necessary; moreover, the kernels can be dried, and sold to druggists for medicinal purposes, so that if they are used at all, they are naturally reserved for the purposes of profit.

The mistress of a family, however, does not use enough peaches for her canning processes to make it an object to save the kernels; the additional labor required in getting them out is nothing in her eyes, or is eagerly performed by children. And, *en passant*, it may be remarked, that in peach districts, where many are used during the season, it is very well worth while to save the stones, dry them, and at the proper time have them cracked, the kernels taken out, and put in a small jar or bottle. Half a dozen are an excellent digester, or they may be used to flavor dried apples in winter, and for various culinary purposes.

Raspberry or currant jellies and jams can be bought at high prices, of fine qualities; but raspberry and currant jams and jellies, which are infinitely superior, cannot be bought for love or money. In England, where the small fruits grow to perfection, and where the art of keeping them has been brought to perfection also, red currants and raspberries are always put together in the making of jams, and pint to pint of the juice of each in making the best jellies.

Housekeepers discover these, and similar points, by experimenting. But purveyors to the public dare not experiment; they must suit to the popular taste, or, at any rate, not violate it, by introducing innovations. From whence come the delicious spiced currants, as an accompaniment to cold lamb; grape ketchup, fruity and well-flavored; pickled pears, odorous, with a mingling of sweet and sour, most grateful to the palate; and magic melons, filled with small, tender green beans, round white onions, pieces of beet cut in odd forms, and other contributions from the garden, wonderfully combined, and adapted to gratify a dainty taste? Where but from some well-supplied store-room in an hospitable country house; where, considering the materials, results are sometimes achieved which would do credit to a Soyer or a Francatelli.

In cities, among business men, a regular allowance, increased as expenses demanded, is usually made for housekeeping, apart from

the money set aside for clothing, or "pocket" money, and when this is the case, it is a good plan to set aside a "stock fund," that is a fund created by a small weekly appropriation for filling up the requirements of the store-room. In New York city, half the usual cost is saved by purchasing dried fruits, box raisins, starch, soap, and other things by quantity in the Fall. Sugar hardly pays; it becomes hard, is sticky, apt to spill, and attracts ants and roaches. Upon dried fruits there is the greatest saving, and as they are most healthful and useful as a winter article of diet, it is an object to obtain them at the lowest city prices.

The best way to keep them is in bottles, well-corked, or self-sealing jars. Where servants are kept, and a lady acts as her own housekeeper, there is always the danger that she will enslave herself to routine and minor details, create an unpleasant feeling of restriction and espionage in the minds of her servants, and while expecting from them an intelligence which will make up for her forgetfulness and shortcomings, deprive them of any sense or power of responsibility.

This is unwise, because servants are always much better for being trusted, and if articles are confided to them with explicit directions that they shall be taken care of, it is rare but they will be produced intact, even though spoiled by keeping, when called for. This is particularly the case with Irish servants, who, if taken fresh, and kindly and carefully taught, are capable of unlimited trust and devotion.

In very large and expensive establishments, where the housekeeper is the real mistress, her duties thoroughly defined, and her authority readily acknowledged, it is her business to superintend the details of the articles used in the kitchen, in cooking, and for the table in a way that is not possible for the lady, wife, mother, mistress, and housekeeper of a middle class family. She *must* leave many things to the discretion and honesty of her cook, and it is best to train her to that end. Practically, she must have the charge of the week's supplies—the sugar, the oatmeal, the hominy, the butter, the rice. She must also be taught how to take care of meat, how to keep different articles from waste and contact, and the necessity for perfect cleanliness in whatever belongs to, or is used in the preparation of food.

These things once taught and understood, leave the mistress of the house free to attend to other things. Her store-room is not the pantry or the larder, it is the base of extra supplies, and can only fulfill its own proper purpose, by not being put to improper uses. For example, it is the home of the canned fruits—the jellies, the old-fashioned jams and preserves, of which one likes to have a reminder occasionally. Also of the precious China ginger, the spiced salmon for Sunday afternoon tea, the sardines and the potted meat for mince, or quick luncheon. The boxes of wafers and sugar biscuits; the box of Mandarin tea, from which the canister is filled as often as required; the japanned cake-box, in which is kept "company" cake (ginger nuts, Graham crackers, and molasses cake being open to those who want them); dried fruits in bottles and jars; extra cheese; pickles, spices, condiments in quantity; anything, in short, which can be kept, and which it is convenient to be able to produce at a moment's notice. I have known housekeepers, whose husbands were apt to bring home guests to dinner unheralded, who kept plum-pudding packed down in jars, ready for instant production in the most approved style; while it is very well known that salad sauce can be kept ready-made for weeks; and dainties, such as English cheese-cakes (the mixture), for months, so that all there is to do, is to put into a puff paste, and bake, in an emergency.

Yes, a store-room, to those who understand how to make the most of it, is a great desideratum. In it, a lobster salad, pickled shad, the remainder of the preserved mushrooms, or horrible Rochefort cheese, which your husband is so fond of, will be safe, covered, and ready for his own, or the family delectation. No, I take it back about the cheese; the smell of that excludes it from the store-room. It ought to have a house built expressly for it, and away from all other objects and edibles.

But it must never be forgotten, that in city or country, while a store-room requires personal care and attention, while exquisite cleanliness, and order, and regularity are necessary to its well-being and the satisfaction to be derived from it, yet these are not the ends of its existence. It lives to be useful to others; it keeps safe from contact, and smell, and base usage, in order that the offering may be more perfect. Do not let

us, in "our house" at least, forget the end in the means, or subordinate the greater to the less, by making the points of household doctrine, order, cleanliness, regularity, all important, and put of sight the comfort, the health, the happiness of the family, for whom all these exist, and for whose benefit they were created.

Make "mother's store-room" precious for mother's sake, and no disturbing element will ever enter therein.

SINGLE BLESSEDNESS.

To Mr. J. B.

BY MRS. J. L.

NE can easily see his wife is away, He wanders so restlessly through the livelong day, Ever and ever down and up, up and down, Where there's usually a smile, there's now nought but a frown.

OR, let me tell you, he has to get his own dinner, And that's perfectly dreadful, you know, for a male sinner, Fancy his washing potatoes and preparing the meat, And so on *ad infinitum*, in order to get something to eat.

AM informed, on reliable information, He despises cooking, like all true lords of creation; Considering it beneath his dignity as a man To touch the dish-cloth, much less the dish-pan.

GAIN, it is whispered, the birds that he cooked Resembled dry cinders, instead of birds looked; Cooks generally read not the affairs of the nation, Whilst a dinner is undergoing preparation.

His housekeeping I would like much to get a sight, Everything, I dare say, in a very, very sad plight; Dishes no doubt piled high in the pan, With chaos ruling supreme as when the housekeeper's a man.

UT there seems no chance for such a peep, 'Tis evident his secret he means to keep; For when about to go out, the curtain descends; To shut out the questioning eyes of his friends.

He is a very nice man, very quiet and so on, But indeed 'tis not edifying the sight of the demijohn Which he carries about; and I heartily wish his wife would appear, For when she's around, of that he shies clear.

ARE very good neighbors, this Mr. J. B. and I, Very good indeed when his wife is by; We talk, and laugh, and joke, as friendly as can be; But when she's away, it's quite a different thing, you see.

GOES past my house some four, or six, or eight times a day; I smile, but never to him a word do I say, Deeming it well, in the absence of wives, With the lonely husbands not to sympathize.

Oh be sure, he has his dog, his gun, and his pipe— Ah! what *would* he do without that last solace of his life; And then besides there's the carpenter's shop, Where nought goes on, those idle days, but smoke and gossip.

WELL, those few days of keeping solitary "Bachelor's Hall," Will increase his love and appreciation tenfold, that's all; 'Tis a little strategy of us wives, I guess, To give our husbands thus a taste of "Single Blessedness."

HOW MRS. BRIGHTWELL WRITES FOR MAGAZINES.

TRUMP! writes for magazines, does she? that tells the whole story— neglected children, husband the same, shirt-buttons off, stockings out at the heel, breakfast late, dinner late, no supper. Of course, *her* clothes suffer—I know her dress looked well enough when she passed, but I will venture to say she was slipshod, and her stockings as bad as her husband's—*blue* at that—all them literary women wear blue stockings. I am happy to say *my* husband and children are not in such a condition. They have plenty of good wholesome food. I never wrote a piece for a magazine, nor I don't mean my Matilda Jane shall. If I thought she would, I would lock her up—*my* family shall never be reduced to that.

Softly, my dear madam. I saw Mrs. Brightwell's two boys as they passed to school this morning, and I assure you, I never saw children looking more healthy, or more neatly dressed than they. You think her husband's clothes are out of order; whose husband was it that I heard, only this morning, complaining of a shirt buttonless, and a vest ditto? *Yours*, was it not?

"See to it, then, that ere thou throwest stones at the glass houses of thy sister, thou protectest well thine own." As for her shoes and stockings, that is the first charge I think that would have aroused the ire of the lady in question—for her husband and children show and can speak for themselves; but a lady's feet are not supposed to be always on exhibition, and my dear madam, you would always find them scrupulously neat, no matter what the dress is, a plain calico or muslin, neatly made, for summer, and a black alpaca; or at least a black silk for winter. The *shoes* are always faultless, the stockings snowy white, and if you surmise that the meals are not punctual, the cooking good, I assure you, that when seven, twelve, and six o'clock come, the husband finds each meal upon the table as punctually as if he were at the best hotel or boarding-house in the land. The cooking also, though plain, is of the best. In regard to your writing for magazines, I do not remember to have seen any of your articles of late. I am very sure none of your compositions were published while we were school-girls together—nor do I think Matilda Jane will ever be guilty of an indiscretion of the kind; but believe me, mother, it would be better were her time thus employed, were she *capable* of writing for magazines, than as it now is, for either *you*, her mother, are too *indolent* or too busy with the affairs of others to know how your daughter's time is employed, and her disgrace and ruin may be upon your head. And now, that I have shown you that Mrs. Brightwell is remiss in none of her duties, I will tell you how *she*, performing them all, still writes for magazines. Let me commence, Yankee-like, by asking you a question: What is your hour for rising? Seven o'clock, you say, early enough for me; but Mrs. Brightwell says she finds that by arising at four o'clock, she has had sufficient sleep. Physiology certainly teaches us that some natures require less sleep than others, and by arising at this hour, she has nearly three hours every morning for writing, and when the children awaken, she is ready for them; so if she prefers to write while we sleep, shall we object? And oh, my friend, let us pray for more of that God-like virtue, *charity*, for "charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity vaunteth not itself, speaketh no ill of its neighbor."

CELESTE.

PENCIL PARAGRAPHS.

BY MATTIE M. BAKER.

SECRETS.

It is often the case that the thoughts and purposes which the heart most desires to keep secret, are those known and read of all.

Mrs. W. H. Maxwell.

Nothing in this world is hidden forever.—*Wilkie Collins.*

Nothing is quite so hard to poison as secrets.—*Anon.*

None are so fond of secrets as those who do not mean to keep them; such persons covet secrets, as a spendthrift does money, for the purposes of circulation.

Anon.

SLEEP.

IN a sound sleep the soul goes forth to recruit her strength, which could not else endure the wear and tear of life.—*Rahel.*

Some dreams are more than all the pleasures that life ever gives our hearts to enjoy.—*Anon.*

That great threatening ferule, laid—like a mighty man asleep—on the desk.

Virginia F. Townsend.

Blessed be the man who first invented sleep, and blessed be heaven that he did not take out a patent, and keep his discovery to himself.—*Cervantes.*

The long, refreshing sleep that makes one mouthful of the night.

The Country Parson.

Give at least twenty-four hours' thought to any important decision, and let a night's sleep intervene between your first conception of a plan and its adoption.

Charles Lever.

In what other painful event of life has a good man so little sympathy as when overcome with sleep in meeting-time?

H. W. Beecher.

Night dreams are the many-colored mental patchwork, made from the spare clippings of our day thoughts.—*Anon.*

SORROW.

It is only after gloom and storm that we truly enjoy the sunshine, and feel how beautiful it is.

Anon.

Sometimes, suddenly, the sudden sense of a past, forever gone, comes over one like a physical sickness.—*Mrs. H. B. Stowe.*

Sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier days.

Anon.

Sorrow shared is half relieved.

Anon.

What strange sweetness, pure affection, can mingle even in the communion of sorrow.

Elizabeth Wetherell.

When sorrow can be brought to describe itself, the worst is over.

Anon.

Better the heart should ache too much,

Than never ache at all.

Eliza Cook.