NATURE'S SOLILOQUY.

[illegible]

THE TWO VISITS.

It was on a cold night in November that I drew up my comfortable chair before a cheerful blaze to the simply furnished, pleasant library, and with my head resting on the pillow of the chair fell to meditating. I had just returned home after paying two short visits to dear old friends of my happy school days, who for the years had been unknown of their own homes. I was asking, as I sat there, to answer the question why it was that I had enjoyed my visit so much more at Mrs. Van Dyke's than I did at Mrs. Bennett's. Both ladies were bright, cordial, entertaining, intelligent and exceedingly agreeable, and I had looked forward to my visits to the pleasure of visiting one in their own homes.

They were equally cordial and entertaining in some sport. Both of these friends married lawyers, who were already active and successful, and both families had the address to the best society.

The homes of these friends were and only comfortable but so obviously tasteful and pleasant, and the children in both homes were bright, handsome and merry, with plenty of friends ready to be invited to their parents.

Yet in all this opportunity in the social circle of both families, in the homes they created, in the homes they had built, in the education of the parents and in their church relations the atmosphere of these two homes was very different, and a visit in the one was a great contrast to the other.

I recalled many incidents of the two visits, and they convinced me, and more strongly than ever before, that the mother makes the home. Her tastes, her judgment, her ideas, her example, her influence, her spirit are all impressed upon the household and create its atmosphere.

At Mrs. Van Dyke's not only was all the household machinery so well oiled that its running was noiseless, but there was no friction whatever in the family. The household were serious, in the old fashioned way, and all the children were ready for breakfast when the meal was announced, and they entered it orderly dressed, and each with his bright face telling their parents, each other and the guests a pleasant good morning. Then after morning prayer, in which the servants participated, each of the older children quietly disappeared from the sitting room to attend to a few practical duties before getting ready for school, appearing ere long, with books in hand, for a goodly kiss and to bid "good-bye" to every word ... mother as they started out.

With perfect composure, and with no apparent trouble, a few friends were asked to dine one evening, and a most delightful visit enjoyed. The flowers, the place, the silver, the table linen were exquisite, and the dinner of only four courses was well cooked, homelike and well served, while the feast of reason, the quick repartee, the witty stories, the bits of political, social and literary talk were just only a pleasure to all the older ones, but a source of edification and culture to the children. Several such informal companies were entertained at Mrs. Van Dyke's while I was there.

In every department the household seemed to move along harmoniously and without apparent exertion or undue care on the part of the mother. She knew who at all times in perfect order, and yet without stiffness or ungracious circumlocution.

I remembered going into one of the children's rooms to look at a gift of a pretty picture, and as little Mary opened a bureau drawer I noticed how neat and orderly it was as was also her closet, where the shoes and clothes were ever set back against the baseboard with regularity and precision. I asked Mrs. Van Dyke when we were alone if Mary, who was nine years old, arranged her closet and drawers herself, to which question her mother replied:

"Certainly. I taught all my children before they were two years old to be orderly. Even at that age," she said, "you know they are very imitative, and they took to the little services for their mothers. I showed them just how to put their clothes and shoes away in an orderly manner, and how to lay things in their drawers and keep them neatly. Then early because they will never forget, I always insisted," she added, "on their how many servants one can afford to have it is well to teach children to be self reliant, and to do everything promptly and well. Such teaching saves a vast amount of work and of unnecessary fretting in the home life. Then it is that some children seem to have naturally more of a bump of order than others, but the orderly habit can be cultivated. If the hanging loop of Mary's coat should give way, an orderly lass would be because she would look for a moment think of hanging it up on the hook until the loop was mended."

All this I recalled as I sat there, and also what my friend said about her housemaid when I had remarked that I had never seen a gentleman who seemed to make so little trouble about the house.

"He was a surprise John is that respect," said Mrs. Van Dyke. "I told him once after we were married that I had been accustomed to see men leave everything about for some one to pick up and asked him how it happened that he was so neat and orderly. He said that when he was about thirteen years old he noticed that his mother picked up and put away what he had left carelessly or about, and when he had tossed up his bureau drawers his mother, without a word, rose and regulated them, and he concluded one day that he was somewhat better able to do all that than his mother, and from that time on he made for an orderly in such ways. And of course Mr. Van Dyke has been a great help to me in the training of our children."

One of the pleasantest memories of the visit was that recalled, that of the evening hour, when Longfellow has immortalized so that every poem, he quotes:

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupation
That is known as the children's hour.

How beautiful it was to see that mother gather her little flock about her and tell them a good story, or read to them, or recite some pretty poem, and talk with them about their lessons, and after dinner play a few merry games with them. This whole hour, when she devoted herself for half an hour and child with her children as they prepared for bed, singing sweet little hymns to them, and with contented, cheerful faces, their thoughts bright and telling their loving good night. That she was one of her practical helpers which was spoken heretofore with.

I could not but contrast with all these sweet memories my visit to Mrs. Bennett's. While she was a attractive and intelligent and quite pretty lady, Mrs. Van Dyke, she had no special manner, no facility in keeping things in order, no quick control over her children, and much less enjoyment with them. There was continual friction in her household, and while there was no lack of love and confidence there was a lack of unity and consequently confident conflict.

There three children were frequently late to breakfast, morning prayer was often omitted because all the family were late, if school time books could not be found, and the buttons and mittens were missing, and there was a general worry and commotion until the children were hurried and scolded into school, and then, when started for school. Then Mrs. Bennett had many little things to do which the children should have done, for no entire hour was in confusion. This induced the mother from attending to her own duties which, if done, would have prevented the household the lack of promptness and entire comfort, and much which otherwise would have been easy to accomplish was made difficult.

To Mrs. Bennett, therefore, it seemed a great undertaking to give a dinner party. Then too, she attempted an elaborate affair with seven or eight courses, with decorated rooms and much surplus, a dinner that required days of her time and thought for several days, and the time of her servants, as well as the expense of hiring extra help. All these preparations so exhausted the hostess that she could not enjoy her guests with the joy one might and should feel, and the effect upon them unconsciously felt by the guests, and it rendered perfect ease and unalloyed pleasure.

I mentioned, too, as the contrast from my visits, the morning devotions, lack of unity, lack of unity and frictions spirits. All this let the children, listening as they were, to grow disrespectful toward their parents, which did not tend to increase the love and respect of friends.

It was seldom that the evening hour was a happy or restful one, for the mother, worn and weary with the many perplexities and cares of the day, was too often unable to be merry with or attentive to her children. Their voices and their noise distressed her and the mother's frayed spirit was contagious. The little ones were hurried off to bed with an anxious nurse, and Mrs. Bennett's sigh of relief was significant. When I left my home with reluctance, where the order, the repose, the easy hospitality had charmed and delighted me, I was ready to leave the other, where even my own spirit became fretted before the door set for my departure.

In the quiet of my own home, and by that cheery blaze in the twilight hour, I said aloud: "And all this difference which made one home so delightful to visit and the other so much less agreeable, was the unconscious influence of the mother and promptness and harmony in the one, and the disorder and disharmony and friction in the other. The good cheer and control showed to parents in the one and the lack of it in the other; the time of entertaining in the one, the hurried one in the other; the time which the parents devoted to their children in the one home, the absence of such devotion in the other; the happy, peaceful spirits in the one, the fretted spirits in the other; the close fellowship between parents and children in the one and lack of such sympathy in the other all this," I said, "is the result of good early training, or a lack of it. In such habits so much have a powerful influence in every home, which will be felt through life."

Her face beaming round the household
Is home.
Young hearts are taken to nobody of earth,
The she dwelling living in the hut,
Where the mother's face is the light or joy.
Where home is the home has some sweet love
given,
Yes and on earth the harmonies of heaven.
—Standard.

How to Make a Rolling Log Go.

Says a member of lumbering: "The quickest way to release a person from the jaws of a lumbering, if he be unfortunate enough to be bitten, is by cutting the dog's hind jaw, in the center of which is an absolutely tender spot called the joint. This should be pressed, as soon better, the jaw takes into the mouth and bites with the teeth. The dog will relinquish the hold at once. It is a desperate remedy, but a sure one, and one that is resorted to by the professional dog fighters."—New York Herald.

Preserving Eggs.

A method of preserving eggs with lime chloride in order to preserve them is now in use in Austria, being known as the Dieter process. The timber is impregnated in the forest as soon as possible after it is felled.—New York Times.

Mr. D. L. Garner is still trying to interpret monkey talk. If he would only set himself to that up some of the monkeys that are chattering all around us now he would render a greater service to humanity.

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