

The Family Circle

QUEER THINGS.

A clock can run, but can not walk;
My shoe has a tongue, but can not talk;
A comb has teeth, but has no mouth;
A north wind blows the smoke straight south.

Bottles have necks, but have no heads,
And pins have heads, but have no necks;
And needles have to hold their threads
Right in their eyes—how it must vex!

If I were a needle, comb, or shoe,
I never should know what to do.
My head is really in a whirl;
I'm glad I am a little girl.

TROUBLE WITH SERVANTS.

'Oh, dear Mrs. Graham!' said my neighbor, Mrs. Jones, to me one day, 'what shall I do for good help? I am almost worried out of my senses. I wish somebody would invent a machine to cook, wash, scrub, and do housework in general. What a blessing it would be! As for the whole tribe of flesh and blood domestics, they are not worth their salt.'

'They are all poorly educated,' I replied, 'and we cannot expect much of them. Most of them have nearly every thing to learn when they come into our houses, and are bad scholars into the bargain. But we must have patience. I find it my only resource.'

'Patience!' ejaculated Mrs. Jones, warmly. 'It would require more patience than Job ever possessed to get along with some of them.'

'And yet,' said I, 'we accomplish little or nothing by impatience. At least such is my experience.'

'I don't know, ma'am,' replied Mrs. Jones. 'If you go to being gentle and easy with them, if you don't follow them up at every point, you will soon have affairs in a pretty condition! They don't care a fig for your comfort nor interest, not they! In fact, more than half of them would, a thousand times, rather make things disagreeable for you than otherwise.'

'I know they are a great trial, sometimes,' I answered, not feeling at liberty to say to my visitor all I thought. 'But we must endeavor to bear it the best we can. That is my rule; and I find, in the long run, that I get on much better when I repress all exhibition of annoyance at their carelessness, short-comings, neglect, or positive misdeeds, than I do when I let them see that I am annoyed, or exhibit the slightest angry feeling.'

Not long after this we accepted an invitation to take tea with Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and I then had an opportunity of seeing how she conducted herself towards her domestics. I was in no way surprised, afterwards, that she found difficulty in getting along with servants.

Soon after my husband and myself went in, and while we were sitting in the parlor, Mrs. Jones had occasion to call a servant. I noticed that, when she rung the bell, she did so with a quick jerk; and I could perceive a tone of authority in the ting-aling of the bell, the sound of which was distinctly heard. Nearly two minutes passed before the servant made her appearance, in which time the bell received a more vigorous jerk. At last she entered, looking flushed and hurried.

'What's the reason you did not come when I first rung?' inquired our lady hostess, in a severe tone.

'I—I—came as quick as I could,' replied the girl, with a look of mortification at being spoken to before strangers.

'No; you didn't! It's your custom to wait until I ring twice. Now let this be the last time!'

And then, in a low voice, Mrs. Jones gave the direction for which she had summoned her.

'Such a set!' ejaculated the lady, as the girl left the room. Her words were intended to reach other ears

beside ours; and so they did. 'That girl,' she continued, addressing me, 'has a habit of making me ring twice. It really seems to give them pleasure, I believe, to annoy you. Ah, me! this trouble with servants is a never ending one. It meets you at every turn.'

And, for some time, she animadverted upon her favorite theme—for such it appeared to be,—until her husband, who was evidently annoyed, managed to change the subject of discourse. Once or twice she came back to it before tea-time.

At last the tea bell rung, and we ascended to the dining-room. We were but fairly seated, when a frown darkened suddenly on the brow of our hostess, and her hand applied itself nervously to the table-bell.

The girl who had set the table came up from the kitchen.

'There is no sugar in the bowl,' said Mrs. Jones sharply. 'I wish you would learn to set the table while you are about it. I'm sure I have spoken to you often enough.'

As the girl took the sugar-bowl to fill it, the frown left the face of our hostess, and she turned to me with a bland smile, and asked whether I used sugar and cream in my tea. I replied in the affirmative; but did not smile in return, for I could not. I knew the poor girl's feelings were hurt at being spoken to in such a way before strangers, and this made me extremely uncomfortable.

'Do you call this cream?' was the angry interrogation of Mrs. Jones, as the girl returned with the sugar, pushing towards her the cream-jug, which she had lifted from the table as she spoke.

'Yes, ma'am,' was replied.

'Look at it, and see, then.'

'It's the cream,' said the girl.

'If that's cream, I never want to see milk. Here! take it away and bring me the cream.'

The girl looked confused and distressed. But she took the cream-jug and went down-stairs with it.

'That's just the way they always do!' said Mrs. Jones, leaning back in her chair. 'I really get out of all patience, sometimes.'

In a little while the girl returned.

'It's the cream, ma'am, as I said. Here's the milk.' And she presented two vessels.

Mrs. Jones took both from her hands with an ill-natured jerk. Sure enough, it was as the girl had said.

'Such cream!' fell from the lips of our hostess, as she commenced pouring it into the cups already filled with tea.

The girl went down-stairs to take back the milk she had brought up, but she was scarcely at the bottom of the stairs, when the bell was rung for her.

'Why don't you stay here? What are you running off about?' said Mrs. Jones, as she came in hurriedly. 'You know I want you to wait on the table.'

And so it was during the whole meal. The girl was not once spoken to except in a tone of anger or offensive authority.

I was no longer surprised that Mrs. Jones found it difficult to keep good domestics, for no one of feeling can long remain with a woman who speaks to them always in a tone of command, or who reproves them in the presence of visitors.

My husband was very severe upon Mrs. Jones after we returned home. 'No lady,' said he, 'ever spoke in anger or reproof to a domestic before a visitor or stranger. Nothing more surely evinces a vulgar and unfeeling mind.'

I did not attempt to gainsay his remark, for he expressed but my own sentiment. So far from uttering a reproof in the presence of a visitor, I am careful not to speak to my domestics about any fault even in the presence of my husband. They have a certain respect for themselves, and a certain delicacy of feeling, which we should rather encourage than break down. Nearly all domestics are careful to appear as well as possible in the eyes of the head of the family, and it hurts them exceedingly to be reproved, or angrily spoken to, before him. This every woman ought to