

Loveliness.

Once I knew a little girl, Very plain; You might try her hair to curl, All in vain; On her cheeks no tints of rose Paled and blushed, or sought repose: She was plain.

A Helpful Thought.

"Has the grate come out?" asked Mrs. Lee. "Of course," responded Laura, with a sharp briefness that was indicative of her feelings. Laura was kneeling beside the little stove. It was so small a stove that the ashes had to be taken up after the fire had been going all the forenoon, or else there would not be draft enough to keep the fire burning at all well during the afternoon. Sometimes the grate would come out of place during the process of ash-removal. Such a catastrophe had occurred now, and Laura, with the assistance of two cloth holders, was trying to lift the hot grate and put the further end back into the hole meant to keep the grate in place. The holders smoked, scorched by the heat; the pan of the ashes and hot coals that Laura had just shoveled out was still under the stove, and sent a additional glow up into the girl's face; the grate obstinately refused to be put back, and Laura pushed, and lifted, and barely avoided being burned, and grew more and more perspiringly uncomfortable. Her lips were set in a grim line that betokened much inward wrath. Her mother looked around from the table, where she was washing the noon dishes. "Let that go till the stove is cooler," advised Mrs. Lee. "It isn't necessary to put the grate back now. Come, wipe the dishes, and wait a while."

day-school class of small boys. She was conscious that she was glad that none of those boys lived in the same house with her, to observe all her actions. She prayed about her temper, often, and she watched, sometimes, too, but still it was so hard! One day, a while after this, Laura, reading a paper, found the following sentence: "Some of our best opportunities come to us in the homeliest shape." "I don't know," the girl thought. "Seems to me almost all the things I have to do are homely enough, but I don't know as I'd call them opportunities." She caught sight of an unexpected line of black on one of her fingers. "There!" ejaculated Laura. "There's a sign of one of the homeliest things I have to do! Cleaning that stove isn't an opportunity, if it is so homely a thing." She dropped her paper, and went to a wash-stand. As she scrubbed the black line from her finger, her recent declaration began to seem not quite so sure a thing, after all. "What could cleaning a stove be an 'opportunity' for?" she questioned; and her conscience promptly responded, "An opportunity for a growth in patience. Laura scrubbed and thought. The more she thought, the more reasonable the idea seemed. Had the Lord, then, given her these homely bits of housework as so many 'opportunities?' Was that what He had meant them for, and had she made the mistake of looking upon them as hindrances, instead? "Some of our best opportunities come to us in the homeliest shape." Was it, then, an "opportunity," when she took up the ashes daily? Was it an "opportunity," when that dreadful little piece had to be fitted into the stove every time the boiler was used? Was it an "opportunity" when somebody, in filling the stove, left some very tiny pieces of coal scattered on the kitchen floor, till Laura, coming by, would step on them and feel them grit under foot. That always made her provoked. "I suppose you might call them opportunities, if you looked at them that way," admitted Laura to herself, "but it isn't the way one is apt to look at them. They're homely enough, though, if that's the way opportunities look." She thought a little. "Well, maybe," she sighed at last "maybe I could take them in that way when I have time to think, but I'm apt to get cross before I think." She remembered, as she said that, how she came in yesterday to find her sister standing by the stove, turning water from the teakettle into a pan, and apparently unconscious that she was standing on the very spot to which Laura had just a moment before swept some dust and splinters and ashes, and left them an instant without taking them up. And Laura, out of patience at the sight of her sister's carelessness, cried out: "What makes you stand there, of all places in the room? Oh, do get out of the way, and let me sweep that up!" How such words sounded from a christian's lips! "Oh! I will try! I will try!" Laura resolved, her eyes filling with tears at the remembrance of those words. "Dear Lord, help me to remember to look at the hard things as opportunities." Such a time as Laura had the next noon with that stove! The family needed a new one, but could not afford it yet, and Laura's mother that day had tried to make the stove's draught better by keeping the little side-door next the grate open. This left the grate not as well supported as it should have been, and Mrs. Lee had put a piece of brick underneath to hold the grate up. Consequently, when Laura began to take out the ashes that noon, the piece of brick was much in the way. It stuck under the grate, and defied Laura's efforts. Let her twist the brick this way or that, it would not come out. Laura pulled with the poker, and shook the hot brick, protecting her hand by a holder meanwhile, and some quick-tempered words made ready on her lips. "What did you put that brick in there for? You might have known better!" She almost spoke those words, but not quite; for there, in the heat and discomfort of the work, a thought of that saying about the homeliness of the best opportunities darted through her mind. "Here's my opportunity, my best opportunity!" she thought. "I know it, because it's so homely! It's come in the homeliest shape it could and I won't lose it by getting angry!" Meantime she was tugging at the grate, and hurt her thumb by accidentally turning back the nail. Her mother came to help take out the brick, and Laura held up the grate with the poker, and waited with patience, determined she would

not lose her "opportunity." The brick yielded at last, and the trouble was over for that noon. "I won't try putting in a brick again," said Mrs. Lee. "I didn't suppose it would be such a bother." But Laura thought to herself: "It was more of an opportunity because it was hard. That's the way I'm going to try to look at the homely, hard bits of housework after this. They're opportunities—opportunities. God gives me to learn patience."—Zion's Herald.

Fault-Finding.

Overworked and fretful mothers are quite apt to fall into this practice. A nervous temperament needs constant watching, and when a mother possessing it is obliged to do the housework and also attended to the little ones, as so many mothers are doing day after day, she will almost unconsciously acquire the habit of fault-finding; and it is the children around the house, often in the way and hindering her in her work, who receive the overflow of her irritability. Not that she intends to be cross, but somehow, what with the work and the worry, it is so easy to fret, and the children, with their noise and their play, are sometimes such an "aggravation" that unless one is keeping strict watch of herself hasty words come easily to the lips. Mothers have need of great patience, and happy is she who is possessed of a naturally even temperament. It makes the government of little children much easier, and is much better for all concerned. If a child seems to need a slight reprimand, it is oftentimes better to overlook it entirely, and pay no attention to it then to be constantly fretting at him. Nagging a child makes him after awhile, indifferent. This, I think, is often the reason why children generally obey the father more readily than the mother. The mother is with them almost constantly, and naturally the most of the government is left with her. The father, being away from home during the day more or less, when he does make a request of a child more heed is paid to it than to the oft-repeated "don't's" and "do's" of the mother. The mothers who nag their children are not, as a rule, very particular in enforcing their commands—for their requests usually take the form of commands—and this leads to direct disobedience sooner or later as well as a loss of respect. In a mothers' meeting not long ago the question came up for discussion whether it is better for mother to overlook slight faults than to notice them every time. Among others who took part in the discussion was an unmarried lady who happened to be present. She said: "You have all heard of 'old maids' children' being better governed than any people's and so, perhaps, will smile at my offering advice upon the subject. But I have know of a number of instances among my married friends where the habit of fault-finding was productive of such bad results that I would like to tell you about them. "One, in particular, was a lady of exceeding neatness in her house-keeping, who was a neighbor of mine, and who was the mother of two boys. From the time they were old enough to play about the floor their mother's excessive neatness made their lives anything but pleasant to them. Toys made such a litter, and play such a noise, that it was only when the weather was warm enough to allow of their being out of doors that they took any comfort in their childish sports, and even then the fear of their mother's displeasure if an apron became torn, or a dress muddy, kept the little fellows in a condition of mind not to be envied. "As they grew older the mother's vigilance did not relax. Her children's comfort, and her husband's as well, was a secondary consideration to neatness and order. It was 'Don't do this,' and 'Don't do that,' from morning till night. Every speck of dirt was placed before their notice, and they were held up as examples of everything that is reprehensible in childhood, upon every occasion. Is it any wonder that those boys grew up to dislike their home? And if they did not actually dislike their mother it is better than she really deserved. Said one of them to me: 'It was mother's constant nagging that drove me away from home.' "This may be an exceptional case," said the lady in conclusion, "but it has brought me to see it in such a light that if I had children of my own to bring up I should certainly be, if anything, too lenient with them, rather than run the risk of the effect of constant fault-finding. And while I do not believe a mother should be a slave to her children, I should sweep and pick up after them rather than nag them for making a litter." This brought out discussion, some of it adverse; but I noticed that the mothers of children who were grown

to manhood and womanhood were quite unanimous in agreeing that if they had their little ones back again they would be more lenient with them, and that in the light of advancing years they could see where they thought their children were now too much given to finding fault with their own little ones. Mothers, think of this!—Ella Rockwood.

Beauty in Woman's Face.

No cosmetics are so capable of enhancing beauty as the smile of good temper and the desire to please. Beauty of expression is, more than other form of loveliness, capable of cultivation. A woman may not have perfectly regular features, but her face will be so lit up with the beauty of goodness that she cannot fail to please if she strive to obey the spirit of some such rules as the following, which may be multiplied or diminished according to particular cases; 1. Learn to govern yourselves, and be gentle and patient. 2. Guard your tempers especially in seasons of ill-health, irritation and trouble and soften them by prayer and a sense of your own shortcomings and errors. 3. Never speak or act in anger until you have prayed over your acts or words. 4. Remember that valuable as is the gift of speech, silence is often more valuable. 5. Do not expect too much from others, but forbear and forgive, as you desire forbearance and forgiveness yourself. 6. Never retort a sharp or angry word. It is the second word that makes the quarrel. 7. Beware of the first disagreement. 8. Learn to speak in a gentle tone of voice. 9. Learn to say kind and pleasant things when opportunity offers. 10. Study the characters of each, and learn to sympathize with all in their troubles, however small. 11. Do not neglect little things, if they can effect the comfort of others in the smallest degree. 12. Avoid moods and pets and fits of sulkiness. 13. Learn to deny yourself and prefer others. 14. Beware of meddlers and tale bearers. 15. Never charge a bad motive if a good one is conceivable. 16. Be gentle and firm with children.—From "The Five Talents of Woman."

"I Have no Influence."

Don't say so, All have some. A gentleman lecturing said: "Everybody has influence, even that child," pointing to a little girl in her father's arms. "That's true," cried the man. At the close he said to the lecturer: "I beg your pardon, sir, but I could not help speaking. I was a drunkard; but as I did not like to go to the public-house alone, I used to carry this child. As I approached the public-house one night, hearing a great noise inside, she said: 'Don't go, father! Hold your tongue, child!' 'Please, father, don't go!' 'Hold your tongue!' I said. Presently I felt a big tear fall on my cheek. I could not go a step further, sir. I turned round and went home, and have never been in a public-house since. Thank God for it! I am now a happy man, sir, and this little girl has done it all, and when you said that even she had influence, I could not help saying: 'That's true, sir.' All have influence."—Newman Hall.

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