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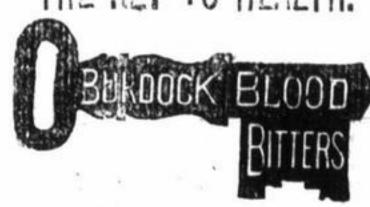
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IS SILENCE GOLDEN?

MRS. BEECHER'S LECTURE TO TALKATIVE MEN AND WOMEN.

he Value of Bridling the Tongue-Noth ing More Effective in Argument Than Silence-"A Wise Woman Will Hold Her Peace" - Some Valuable Points For Wives in the Management of Husbands.

(Copyrighted, 1887.)

No greater kindness or more beneficial in struction can parents bestow upon their children than from their earliest years to teach them how wise a thing it is to bridle the tongue. But the most efficient and lasting teaching of this doctrine will be that which the children gather from their parents' personal example. In that, more than words, is of a character to convince them that their parents believe in, and conscientiously endeavor to practise themselves, the lessons they attempt to teach, we may be sure the children will be quick to recognize it and eager to imitate.

Nothing is sweeter than true social intercourse, and the friendly or the family circle would be dull and most unsatisfactory if not enlivened and cheered with frequent and cheerful conversation all through the day or week. But, however much freedom and affectionate confidence there may be among friends, or in the re lations of home, even there it is not wise or safe to leave the tongue wholly unbridled.

The "word spoken in season how good it is." But even with our best and dearest, now and then, every day, there are occasions when the power of silence is far more to be depended upon, and is infinitely more efficacious than the most royal gifts of eloquence. We have seen cases, and more particularly among the young, when what seems an ungovernable outbreak of passion has been quelled by a perfectly calm silence. Not one word of reply has oftenlike oil upon the troubled waters-laid to rest the perturbed spirit, and brought smiles and peace where but for this soverei, n

Few are so perfect that some disturbance will not occasionally arise that tends toward a dispute. Even an argument may become so heated that it leads close on to a dispute. Although the definitions of argument and dispute, as given by the authorities, are almost synonymous, yet it always seems that disputes border more closely on to irritation or anger than arguments do. At any rate the powder magazine is so near to both that holding back a reply, although the hardest, is much the wisest way. There are times, which every one has probably known, when even "a soft answer" has not half the power of perfect silence.

With the ignorant and passionate it is not only useless but the wildest folly to argue or dispute. Was Solomon, with all his wisdom, in the most trustworthy state of mind and judgment when he advised to "answer a fool according to his folly?" If gifted with great self-control, sensible people might dispute or disagree on many points of interest, and yet not forget the laws of kindness and good sense; but none can "answer a fool according to his folly" without descending to his level.

In the household many things demanding forbearance and a great stock of patience are springing up constantly. In large families particularly, hardly an hour passes, even when all endeavor to be guided by the laws of love and kindness, that little clouds do not appear in the distance, shadows pass over the horizon, which, by a trifling irritation or mistake would soon gather in black clouds, threatening a violent storm. But by silence, "setting a watch over the door of the mouth," these shadows pass away and leave no trace be-

None more than the wife need to have the full possession of the crowning grace of silence and the ability to know instinctively when to hold her peace, even from words of greeting or endearmant. Men are so entirely different in their respect that, while loving strongly and faithfully they are not so dependant on the daily outward expression of affection as woman. With

"Love will die if it is not fed, And the true heart cries for its daily bread." With men a word of endearment, a smile or a caress are all pleasant enough now and then; yet these little weaknesses are not necessary to a man's comfort or happiness. But a loving wife can dispense with food and rest, and think it no hardship, if by so doing for a time, forgetting her own bodily needs, she secures the time to cater for the taste, or minister to the comfort of those she loves. But gentle words and attentions, especially from the one loved par excellence, she cannot dispense with without suffering and loss. They are her life. With them her nature expands, broadens, grows richer and nobler; without them she withers and becomes impoverished. Many husbands little understand how quickly their wives may deteriorate or become mere cold machines, if they pass heedlessly on their way forgetting the heart-famine they leave at

But no matter how much a woman may crave gentle attentions and loving notice, if wise she will teach herself to understand the great power she may earn by silence not grim, unamiable silence, but that which gently, unostentatiously tends to peace. Its patient continuance will often enlighten the eyes which have been unconsciously holden to the unintentional neglect, which has perhaps, left shadows on the home life, and once recognized they will love and honor the wife all the more for the quiet lesson she has taught by her silence. There are times in men's lives far more than in women's when any reply to hasty or careless remarks or complaints, however just, of inattention or supposed neglect, would be most untimely and, perhaps, cause serious trouble.

A woman in comfertable health naturally rises in the morning in a cheerful, happy frame of mind, inclined to sprightly conver-sation, and were her husband able to be equally so could in those few moments of morning converse and greeting drink in enough nectar to make her eyes bright and her step elastic all day long. But a life of business or public duties is seldom conducive to a good night's rest, or a cheerful, happy waking.

Unfortunately, however, it often happens that the short time devoted to waking and dressing are the very moments when a wise woman will hold her peace, content to know that kindly attentions and pleasant words have more power, and are better appreciated after a hot steak or chop, and a good cup of coffee, than before.

This state of things does not strike oneespecially a woman-as exactly just. But here are the facts which in many families are so common that one cannot gainsay to resist them. Can a change be effected by constant repining? Will a long, sad face make the delinquent more thoughtful?

Will it not enchance the evil and tend to change occasional carelessness into settled indifference? Worse still, by a habit of complaining, perhaps reproaching, does not a wife endanger her own love? While that shines undiminished there is always hope that "the dove of peace and promise" will

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yet fold its wings and take up its abode with them, and then the last days of that household shall be brighter than the first. The virtue of silence -a cheerful silencewhen tempted to "last words," will do more to scatter all threatening clouds than the sharp, bitter words wounded pride or irritated love temptsone to utter. The first faithfully acted upon insures hope of brighter days, the latter, if not for once and forever repressed, is sure destruction of all true love and domestic peace.

But it is not alone in home life that "silence is golden." There is no position in life that would not be better for believing and acting upon that rule. In all our intercourse with friends and neighbors, how many irritations, how many disturbances would be calm and pass away, how many quarrels would be avoided, if that unruly member, the tongue, could be kept in proper subjection. Too frequent visits to saloons, and frequent potations there, leave little power to resist temptation or to exercise self control. In such a condition one word spoken unguardedly is like a match to powder, and in a moment sharp words, blows, and peshaps murder, is the result. when but for that untimely word the saddest part of these disgraceful orgies might have been avoided. It might be found difficult to decide which has done the most harm in this world of ours, intemperance or the unregulated use of the tongue.

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