CHARLOTTE MASON INSTITUTE

PARENTS' REVIEW

MOTHERS

COLLECTION NO. 1

Dear Reader,

Charlotte Mason founded *The Parents' Review* in 1890 as a means to expose parents and teachers to some important principles of education and to help them stay current in their thinking about the education and training of children. Thus, she gave the magazine the subtitle of "A Monthly Magazine of Home-training and Culture."

Mason covers a wide range of topics in *The Parents' Review;* the magazine comprises hundreds and hundreds of articles. Over the years, many individuals have mentioned to us that they would like to see the articles grouped into collections by subject so that the content is more readily accessible. One of the most oft-cited difficulties articulated is that of having to search through the indices of each individual issue in order to locate articles on a particular subject. Or, one must go to various websites and click through endless links to try and find an article. The articles have been grouped according to topic.

The Charlotte Mason Institute and Riverbend Press are pleased to provide the Charlotte Mason community with access to vetted articles from *The Parents' Review*. Our process of selection included searching the indices and finding every article on a given topic, as well as reviewing the articles and selecting those we deemed most relevant to today's readers in terms of content and applicability. We aimed to compile the best articles on a given topic and present them in a single document. We believe this will save you time that you otherwise would have spent searching, printing, organizing and filing articles.

We hope you enjoy these collections of *The Parents' Review* articles. We also hope that in some way their availability can move the Mason movement of today forward into the future—not back towards the past.

The Charlotte Mason Institute and Riverbend Press

May 2020

Dear Reader:

The month of May is associated with Mother's Day. We can sometimes allow a holiday like Memorial Day to sneak up on us, but Mother's Day, while it may sneak up on us, we would be horrified at ourselves if we let it pass unnoticed. Many countries today celebrate Mother's Day. This curated *Parents' Review* is a collection of articles written to encourage mothers.

The first article which I will concentrate on here almost seems to have little to do with motherhood. And yet, this article digs deep into the responsibility of motherhood without really talking about it. With equal effect, it could be applied to fathers. The author, who was afraid that mothers were setting aside the religious training of their children because of "Biblical criticisms," discusses how Christian training should be viewed. He gives several images for his thinking. First, "Christian teaching resembles a growing organism, and not a chain." When we view life as "living" we approach our ways of teaching very differently than if we view life as simply matter. The living organism changes, grows, recedes and grows again. The links in a chain may drop off and thus end, but not so the living organism which uses the old links to continue to grow. The author goes on to give another example. Rooper says,

> To this inner consciousness of the sadness of the lot of men, the Greeks gave voice in the most splendid series of Tragedies which exist in the world's literature, but their grandeur overwhelms and paralyses rather than stimulates the mind. Theirs is a revelation of sorrow which leaves us despondent and passive rather than buoyant in spirit and alert to promote the happiness of other people" (p. 323).

These comments remind me of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks words about the Greeks, "Sir Bernard loved ancient Greece; I loved biblical Israel. Greece gave the world tragedy; Israel taught it hope. A people, a person, who has faith is one who, even in the darkest night of the soul, can never ultimately lose hope" (p. 13). So what about the Cross, the darkest of nights?

Yes, Greece gave us tragedy without hope and Israel gave us a story full of hope, a longing for the coming Messiah. According to the Christian faith that Messiah came, suffered for us and now provides us with the hope of life or "living." He is our Tree of Life. So, Rabbi Sacks is correct when he says, "A people, a person, who has faith is one who, even in the darkest night of the soul, can never ultimately lose hope" (p. 13). Our hope is in the suffering of the Cross.

What did Paul teach us about this? The Greeks and the Romans sought citizenship for men (only), a communion among men. Paul sought to show all humankind the example of the Perfect Man which in turn acts as a model for all humanity. Yes, we are all citizens of the Kingdom of God—men, women, all races and all people groups. Thus, we are made to live in a community or communion of all humankind, not just men. The author of the first

article says it this way, "We cannot neglect our own interests without detriment to our fellow creatures, nor can we selfishly put out of sight the wider interests of humanity without impairing our own" (p. 325). We are made for community.

The Cross in this community acts as a means or a way of seeing life as it could be and not always as it is. That is, yes the reality of life is staring us in the face and it can be truly hard and negative, but the reality of the Cross helps us to see beyond that to give us hope for tomorrow. Some people say that they do not want to live for hope of tomorrow which may not come. They want to see life as it is now, today, and make the most of today which usually means seeking their own pleasure for the moment. They are not concerned with a hope of a better life to come. But the hope of the Christian is not an either or situation. We are created physical beings who live in the now (enjoying nature, history, literature, visiting grandma, or visiting a grandchild) and do the best we can because of the Cross. But the Resurrection gives a future, a hope for a time when the world will be put right again.

The world we live in today is a difficult place. Even though this article was written over 100 years ago, it could easily be applied today. Mothers are encouraged to continue to teach their children the Scriptures. The author feared that many were setting aside religious education because of "interminable controversies." His warning sounds so familiar to us all these years hence. Here is what the author says,

> The lives of most of us may not do justice to the inspiration which we may have felt from our early study of the Bible; but nearly all people will admit that what is best in their characters can be readily traced to that source, and therefore I repeat with earnestness, do not let us throw away wheat and chaff in a fit of despondency caused by Biblical criticism and the apparent hostility to truth of many pious preachers, but let us continue to cling to the Gospels, and read them daily with the children as far the most important part of their education (p. 330).

This is good advice for mothers, but not just mothers, rather, for all parents—mothers and fathers alike. We have the hope of the Cross because the Cross produced the Resurrection. The Messiah overcame for all of us and because He overcame, we have the hope of a future. Mothers be encouraged because it does not depend on any of us being perfect parents. He left you with the Holy Spirit as your counsellor and guide.

Thanking our mothers,

Carroll Smith

Articles in this collection*

Rooper, T.G. (1893). Mothers and Sons: The Religious Difficulty. *Parents' Review, 3.* Issue 5. 321-330. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Booth, Mrs. A. (1894). The Influence and Teaching of the Educated Mother. *Parents' Review, 4.* Issue 2. 81-90. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Margesson, Lady I. (1894). Training Lessons to Mothers. *Parents' Review, 4.* Issue 1. 17-24. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Powell, A. (1894). Mothers as Sick Nurses. *Parents' Review, 4.* Issue 9. 692-696. London: Parents' National Education Union.

(1894). A Mother's Letter. *Parents' Review, 4.* Issue 9. 641-648. London: Parents' National Education Union.

A.F.S. (1895). Home Life. *Parents' Review, 5.* Issue 3. 190-194. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Carus-Wilson, Mrs. A. (1896). "To You and To Your Children" Some Thoughts for Young Mothers. *Parents' Review, 7.* Issue 3. 195-202. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Anson, Mrs. (1897). The Mother's Educational Course. *Parents' Review, 8.* Issue 7. 463-468. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Lord Bishop of Stepney. (1901). Boys and Mothers. *Parents' Review, 12.* Issue 2. 81-92. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Lady Hamilton. (1901). The Scope of Motherhood. *Parents' Review, 12.* Issue 9. 694-700. London: Parents' National Education Union.

Note: Articles are arranged in the order in which they appear in this collection.

Thank you to Laura Marshall for her assistance.

THE

PARENTS' REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF HOME-TRAINING AND CULTURE.

"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

MOTHERS AND SONS.

THE RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTY.

MANY a mother retains the confidence of her schoolboy son on serious subjects long after he has assumed an attitude of reserve towards all the rest of his elders and betters.

Happy mothers! Happier sons! In dealing with sons it is, as a rule, only mothers who combine love and judgment; and

> "They that have love and judgment too
> See more than any other doo."

Of such mothers there are some who are from time to time startled by the remarks to which these confidences give rise, when conversation turns upon the leading points of domestic religious instruction. Ideas which are passed over by fathers with busy indifference, or are suppressed with indignant combativeness, may often be better dealt with by a mother's wise and sympathetic thoughtfulness. It is easy to mistake youth and to suppose that it is heedless and frivolous, and merely wishful to cast the old aside in order "to sin the oldest sins the newest kind of way." Youth, on the contrary, is apt to be in earnest—too much so for some older people. Unquestionably the foundation of faith for youth in these days is seriously

shaken. The question forces itself on the attention, whether, in the long process of the education of the human race, Christianity has been but an episode which is drawing to an end. Is it a fact that, while the arguments of theologians in support of ordinary domestic religious instruction grow stronger and stronger, effective belief in general society is continually growing weaker and weaker? Is it a fact, as was stated lately in several letters to the public press, that youths are ceasing to attend church as a rule, and that only those of them are present who make a study of liturgical ceremonies, who are devoted to lay preaching, or in some other way make a specialty of their religious convictions? The history of religious beliefs seems to show that what men accept or reject depends less upon argument than upon fashion. Men believe in the main what the men believe among whom they live. The learned who argue about those beliefs are really following when they appear to be leading. Men do not believe because scholars discuss, but scholars discuss what men happen to believe. Thus, if a number of good and learned old men announce to society that they have not changed their opinions since the days of their youth, shall we wonder that many young men, conscious that between such opinions and their own a great gulf lies open, caused by two generations of study and discovery, tacitly ignore the doctrines of their elders, and seek fresh light from other sources? If they speak out what is in their mind, shall we condemn them, and not rather approve? When so much is changing, is it not natural and right to ask what is permanent?

Christian teaching resembles a growing organism, and not a chain. There is a huge difference. A chain is made up of links, and every link that is broken breaks the chain. In a living organism, on the other hand, growth leaves behind it much matter that is decaying or dead, and a good deal which, after serving its purpose in construction, has thenceforth ceased to grow. Thus, while a broken link leaves a chain hanging useless, matter which has ceased to have any life may yet support the centre of vitality of an organism, and, in spite of its inanimate condition, may be essential to life, or, at any rate, indispensable to an understanding of the life which it supports.

Moving in such a sphere of thought, I approach the great question of the day: whether the Cross is to be in the future, as it has been in the past, the centre of moral teaching in Christen-

dom. That the symbol of the Cross everywhere predominated in the Middle Ages is obvious to every traveller. He sees men and women still buying and selling around the base of Gothic market crosses; he finds a cross on many an ancient bridge provided for him by the munificence of his ancestors; it is embossed or carved on the beams of many a mediæval dwelling-house in patterns and forms of beauty. The same token is still signed on the brow of the new-born babe, and marks the last resting-place of the dead. Even amid the carnage of modern warfare a cross indicates the army of mercy which attends to the wounded and dying.

Does this symbol of suffering continue to be the best accompaniment of all we think and say and do, from the cradle to the grave? When many thoughtful men say "No" to it, in what light can we answer this important question with a "Yes"?

The doctrine of the Cross has for nearly 1900 years formed the single distinct thread that has permeated the motley web of human affairs in Christendom. In all the variety of professions and occupations which absorb each man in his own duties and affairs the Cross alone has been a bond of union. In all sorts and conditions of men there is only one common element, and that is sacrifice. "Thou must forego" is earth's bitter, if bracing, commandment, and it is the only one that all of us, sooner or later, are obliged to fulfil. Men are separated in action; they are united in suffering. This fact is the basis of the doctrine of the Cross.

To this inner consciousness of the sadness of the lot of men, the Greeks gave voice in the most splendid series of Tragedies which exist in the world's literature, but their grandeur overwhelms and paralyses rather than stimulates the mind. Theirs is a revelation of sorrow which leaves us despondent and passive rather than buoyant in spirit and alert to promote the happiness of other people. The development of a man's fortune in that view is independent of his own will. Far different is the "word of the cross," which expresses for Christians exactly the same sense of sorrow. St. Paul in his "word of the cross" drew a distinction between man as one of diverse individuals and man as all that is human, the whole of humanity. He conceived of the idea of the union of many separate human elements namely Jew, Greek, disciples of one preacher, disciples of another, bondsmen, freemen, males, females, in one whole. Out of this

manifold, he created by an effort of thought a rational unity, including the whole human race viewed as a Christian community, or one Church.

Such is his conception of the Perfect Man, and it is unusual, lofty, and strangely akin to that of some influential thinkers in recent times who seem, however, to have arrived at the same conception by a different road. Ancient philosophy attained to a noble view of the communion of men which is conveyed in the motto, "Orbis terrarum una urbs." That each man, whether Roman, Greek, or of any other nation, should feel himself a citizen of one state, the world, is a lofty generalisation, but St. Paul had a vision of the human race, in which every man should live according to the type, or example, of a Perfect Man, such perfection corresponding to the full, rich and fruitful significance of the name Christ in his own mind, "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." This is the conception of a perfect whole perfected in the perfection of all its parts.

The difficulties which are produced by life's variety are rendered easier if not removed by this "word of the cross." Who that thinks at all is not driven to apparent inconsistency when led to ask "What am I to do for others, and what for myself?" "What am I to keep for myself, and what am I to give away?" "When distinct duties clash by what rule shall I act?" The doctrine of the whole and its parts, simple as it is seems, is rarely comprehended just because it is only to be comprehended by a mental effort. Have not some good men endeavoured to avoid such difficulties by extremely simplifying life. They adopted one good principle, and followed it out in isolation. One saint pursued the principle of self-sacrifice alone, and dwelt on a column in the wilderness, while others would protract a solitary life as hermits, divested of all life's so-called superfluities in a mouldering cavern, forsaking the duty of living among men to save their own souls. They sought perfection by eliminating instead of perfecting the varied faculties with which they were endowed from their birth. If there is truth in the "word of the cross" life is not such a simple affair. No man can separate his own welfare from that of the general, or contribute much to the general good if he carries self-sacrifice to the extreme point of abnegation. He makes a cheap sacrifice of all he has who has nothing to sacrifice, and before a man give to others, he must first endow himself with something worth their acceptance. This

is true not merely of worldly substance, but of intellectual endowment.

We cannot neglect our own interests without detriment to our fellow creatures, nor can we selfishly put out of sight the wider interests of humanity without impairing our own.

Life, according to the "word of the cross" is no aimless self-abnegation to obtain self-glorification hereafter. Nearer akin to it is the spirit of these fine lines:

> "Help me to need no aid from men,
> That I may help such men as need."

We may often in helping others sacrifice a present interest, but we fail not to gratify that larger self, that expanded self-will which includes mankind, or all men, summed up in the expression, "the perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Religion, science, and philosophy alike point to unity in all creation, and it would seem that we, by our action, may assist to promote a social unity, which is the aim of Christianity. Failure in such a cause can be but partial, for in great undertakings many must fail before one succeeds, and many must hand on hopes to others which they cannot expect to see fulfilled in their own time. It is part of the gospel of the Cross to see things as they may be, and to be blind to things as they are. "The case was hopeless, yet he hoped." This spirit has been the prudent folly or the insane wisdom of the Christian saint.

Not to have tried is sorrow indeed, but trial with failure produces the generous elation of St. Paul, when he exclaims: "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church"; or, in the words of a modern poet:

> "For the power appears to-morrow,
> That to-day seems wholly lost,
> And the reproductive sorrow
> Is a treasure worth the cost."

One possible view of the Atonement, then, is the setting at one of all creation in God through the Cross, or, in other words, communion in the cup of sacrifice. Certain learned men have evolved a much simpler account of it. Heaven is a Court of Justice. God is judge. Man is the defendant cast in a suit. The judge strikes a balance, setting in one scale all man's sins

and in the other all Christ's suffering. Thus Justice is even-handed, and man escapes punishment.

What is punishment, that we should seek to escape it? The most real punishment of sin, according to one of the greatest writers, is that state of mind in which the offender is content with his condition, and ceases to believe in good.

"No parody of Gospel teaching," says a living theologian, "can be more unlike the truth than that which represents it as the discharge of the sinner, being sinful still, from the penalty of guilt through the intervention of the guiltless." The fact is, that many philosophical theologians and reformers have spent much time in trying to devise a scheme by which salvation shall be placed upon a mechanical basis; but, like the quality of mercy, salvation is not strained, and cannot be defined in the legal phraseology of Jewish or Roman law. According to the word of the Cross, our inspiration is derived from a living and not from a dead Christ, for St. Paul writes: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." This "living Christ" precludes passive contemplation of the death and Cross of Christ, and condemns, therefore, the paralysis of any human faculty. The process of redemption can be nothing automatic or mechanical. In every Christian life Christ lives as he lived in St. Paul.

> "And no man asks his fellow any more
> Where is the promise of His coming? But
> Was he revealed in any of His lives
> As Power, as Love, as influencing Soul?"

We can afford, then, to concern ourselves but little with either the material torments of popular theology, or with its equally material awards. Christ in glory, golden crowned and clad in purple, distributing gifts to His followers, is not a vision for every one; but Christ with a crown of thorns, weary with toil for the sake of those who persecuted Him, and worn with suffering and sympathy, is an image open to the gaze of all who are aware of the presence of evil without and within, who enlist all powers of body and mind on the side of good, and who seek in doing good a closer communion with God. We know the cup which all who will may drink, and which the first apostles had to receive in exchange for the expectation of very different gratification.

What, then, shall we teach children on these matters? It is very easy to instil into their minds false ideas. Christ died that He may live in us. This physical death may be our spiritual life. Good then and true is the verse of the child's hymn which runs thus:

"Thou didst suffer, gentle Jesus,
Bitter shame and agony;
From sin's bondage to release us,
Thou didst hang upon the tree."

But would Christ, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me," have allowed that they *caused* any of His pain and suffering? It is one thing to die on behalf of another, but it is a different thing to lay your death at the door of that other for whom you die. It is, therefore, a misleading way of conveying a spiritual truth to express it thus:

"But my sins it was that stung Thee,
Not the scourge, the nail, the spear,
'Twas my sins alone that hung Thee
On the Cross, my Saviour dear."

Christ, we read, "nailed our sins to the Cross." This is not the same as saying that the sins were the nails. It is one thing to say that Christ's sorrow for sin gave Him more pain than His physical suffering. It is misleading to say that the sin is the cause of Christ's bodily pain. Christ our Passover is a figure of speech which must not be pressed too far. The Jewish sacrificial victims were not, like Christ, moral victims. The greatness of the Atonement, as preached by St. Paul in his Gospel, is that it was a moral and not a mechanical sacrifice.

They that are crucified with Christ will not rest content with any ingeniously elaborated scheme of redemption, nor will they confine their gaze to a cross moulded by human art into a form of earthly beauty steeped in rapture and adoration. For them the word of the Cross is a source of spiritual force, through which they may eradicate unconscious selfishness, and sympathise with the manifold fragmentary efforts of all who mean and do well to men. To be crucified with Christ is to grasp and hold in the mind the death which He died, as an inspiration to act from day to day throughout life.

Thus the Cross, as a symbol of the sacrifice which is productive of good to others, is something more than a sign. It is a

remembrance of a self-renunciation which has produced countless thousands of imitators, and has formed a bond of union between all who can now, or could in the past, give their lives or their labour for other's good, and who find in the expansion of their sympathies the same pleasure in working for others which is usually and vainly expected in pursuing self-regarding ends.

Thus, too, the Cross, originally the symbol of suffering, becomes a source of comfort and consolation, for the measure of our power to console others is the measure of our own sorrow. "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so the power of our consolation aboundeth by Christ." In this view the word of the Cross is not dependent upon the opinion of current scholarship or physical science. Accepting such a view of the power of the gospel unto salvation, our aim in life will not be affected by the varying judgments of commentators. We shall not be troubled, for instance, if we find that some of the Psalms were written in the time of the Maccabees, and not by David, or that the stories of creation in Genesis are more like hymns than text-books of biology. Shall we expect to find the researches of modern science in the outpourings of the Hebrew prophets? Is the spirit which inspired them a spirit of holiness and goodness, of knowledge of rightness, a spirit to kindle the fire which alone can drive the moral engine within us; or is it a spirit to determine the age of a fossil or the date of a manuscript?

Our opinion on the nature of that spirit does matter, because if we look to it as a source of knowledge on dates and details of biology or physics we shall, as science advances, be labouring in that slough of despond which consists in reconciling discrepancies; but if we leave the details of science and history to scientific men and historians, and if we adhere to the spirit as a source of inspiration to lead a good life, then the greatness of the Scriptures will remain undisputed, however often scientific opinion may change in respect of pigs or creeping things, or however often things, once thought mysterious and inexplicable, become looked upon as common or familiar.

No change in scientific opinion about the date and value of books, about botany or about geology can ever alter what is independent of all such knowledge. All the noblest things that have happened in Christendom, whether we look at the lives of the saints of fame or at the piety of the humblest cottager living and dying in the spirit of Christ, are the real illustration of the

eternal, impregnable and unchanging truths of the Old and New Testaments. It is no proof of the truth of Scripture to show that if you take the words of this or that text in a new sense it will square with a new scientific classification, and they only give the lie to Holy Writ, who for pity, mercy, love, substitute some other principle as the basis of their dealings with their fellow-men.

Many will disapprove of the views which I have tried to explain because they appear to want definition and firm outline. No doubt under them much that has been sharply defined melts again into the indefinite. Many people need something tangible, and here all seems fluctuating. They seek something simple and fixed, that they may seize it at once, and here the object of their pursuit eludes their grasp. They yearn to depend upon the authority of those whom they can respect, and here the responsibility of choosing what they shall think or do is thrown upon their own shoulders. But these very difficulties are recommendations to thinking men. Religious life is no easy thing. It is a struggle to escape from the material to the spiritual, in spite of the fact that the latter cannot be comprehended or attained, except through the former. It therefore needs constant, renewed, active and earnest thought, which cannot be easy. In daily life the new must for ever be modifying the old, and the standard of goodness, like every other ideal, must be modified and improved in the unending labour of reaching forth after what is approachable but never attainable. The spirit remains the same, the matter in which it works keeps changing. It is useless, for instance, to entertain a fixed belief about Creation when our knowledge of created things is constantly growing and enlarging. In the Cross is our atonement, and through it all difference of opinion should be reconciled between men of good-will. For now as of old "Christ is our peace." This view of the atonement is not a new theory for the learned, but a pristine fact acted on for ages and ages by the simple. The voluntary death of Christ is not an act without parallel. The blood of many a good man has been shed for the sake of others, both before and since the Crucifixion. Nevertheless the Cross is the true sign of unselfishness in Christendom, because in it nearly all (I do not say all) voluntary self-sacrifice since the Christian era has been associated with this one sacrifice of Himself by Christ. Hence the Crucifixion is not any more one single act of self-sacrifice

done once for all a long time ago, but a continuous act magnified and intensified by untold numbers of self-sacrificing actions wrought by countless multitudes of people, who, living for the good of others, have done all in the name of the cross of Christ, which inspired them to act and think, to live and to die.

Is it not a great and stimulating reflection that in the far future this conception of the Cross will continue through the lives of good men further to fill and enlarge and intensify itself, and that as it grows older it will gather strength, and that though the torrent of pain and wrong will continue to stream forward in history, yet like a full tide from the ocean, the life of the Cross will appear in increasingly manifold forms, widening, freshening, and healing, as it swells onward with silent resistless flow.

Surely it is a high and generous thought, and worthy of the eager spirit of youth that his unit of existence may form part of so magnificent a whole.

I have put before you a layman's theology, and I know how little value that must have, because all unprofessional opinion is subject to one great defect—that it involves no responsibility. It may, however, be an aid to professional opinion. My object is to encourage those mothers, who are discouraged by the interminable controversies concerning points of Christian faith, and are abandoning religious teaching altogether, to catch beneath the noise of the waves of superficial trouble the still clear tones of our heritage in the Church.

In the main our health depends upon the air which we daily breathe. If that be of the freshest and brightest our health is likely to correspond. Can enthusiasm for the highest type of character be more readily and lastingly awakened by any other literature than that of the Bible? If not, then let this be the atmosphere which children of the present breathe daily as has been the custom in the past. The lives of most of us may not do justice to the inspiration which we may have felt from our early study of the Bible; but nearly all people will admit that what is best in their characters can be readily traced to that source, and therefore I repeat with earnestness, do not let us throw away wheat and chaff in a fit of despondency caused by Biblical criticism and the apparent hostility to truth of many pious preachers, but let us continue to cling to the Gospels, and read them daily with the children as far the most important part of their education.

T. G. R.

TRAINING LESSONS TO MOTHERS.

By the Lady Isabel Margesson.

In these days parents are, I think, anxious to be more in touch than they used to be with the education of their children. The revolution in the educational world brought about by the conviction that a knowledge of certain laws of physiology and psychology must underlie any teaching that is to be effective, is now an old story. The effect of this revolution has, however, been lessened by the fact that parents have as yet, to a great extent, been untouched by it. Without their intelligent co-operation, scientific education could not proceed to its full development.

Parents are now roused to feel that there is a mass of sound scientific knowledge, moral and physical, which has been accumulated, and which they can only neglect to their own and their children's future disadvantage.

But the process of being roused does not always leave clear notions behind it, and what parents now desire is to know how to put into practice the principles of the so-called "New Education;" for they are determined that their children shall profit by the many opportunities of fuller knowledge which are given at the present day.

The first step on the road to a practical application of these principles is to be convinced that they constitute the only scientific basis of education. We must study them with care and thought, and although it may sometimes be difficult to find time to read the works of specialists such as Herbert Spencer, Locke, Sully, Froebel, Pestalozzi, we shall, if we make the effort, be rewarded by learning how to fulfil our highest vocation of training our children to be "worthy in their generation."

The Parents' National Educational Union here offers us its help. It cannot, of course, supply the place of that individual

study of the subject, which can only be based on the exercise of man's own thought. But the Parents' Union can and will act as a sort of middleman to bring parents and great thinkers on education into touch with each other.

The Belgravia and Westminster Branch of the Union has just had an illustration of the kindness of educationalists. Mrs. Walter Ward (who perhaps is better known as Miss Emily Lord) has given her time and labour for sixteen years to the cause of education, and to making known its truest and highest principles.

She has an "Educational Mission," but up to the present it has not been so much to parents as to teachers and children. During last November Mrs. Ward consented to give a course of ten lessons to mothers, and it is of these that I wish to speak, as I think they were highly suggestive of means by which parents may be greatly helped and strengthened in their own self-training.

The lessons (of two hours each) were given in the house of one of the members of the class, who kindly lent us her dining-room for the occasion. We were thirteen mothers in all, few enough to allow of plenty of discussion, and to enable each of us to be in touch with Mrs. Ward.

The first morning was devoted to teaching a few elementary principles of psychology, which serve as the foundations of a scientific education, so that on future occasions we might go back to the "Grammar" when perplexed. This lesson was, I think, of special interest, as going to the root of the matter and as helping to take away the feeling of our being only "amateur dabblers," which haunted some of us. In our various difficulties Mrs. Ward was able to refer us back to elementary truths, and to show us how we might judge methods and principles by the light of unchangeable laws.

Two of Mrs. Ward's lessons were on teaching arithmetic. How many women like to confess that until they were grown up they did not know there was anything rational in the Multiplication Table? In these days we see our children taught the property of number in the concrete form before the abstract, and find that it is thoroughly understood by them, and we know that even those of us of whom in our schoolroom days it was said, "So-and-so never could do arithmetic," might have passed happy hours over that hated, because incomprehensible, study. Mrs.

Ward's lesson on arithmetic showed us that it was quite simple and easy to teach children much about numbers out of school hours. In doing this parents prevent the sharp division between school-life and "out-of-school-life," in, at least, one branch of study, and perhaps other subjects would in time be treated in the same way, and parents would become real co-operators with the teachers and children. In this way the unity and continuity of education would be made more secure.

The intelligent sympathy of parents cannot, however, be given if they are entirely in the dark as to the reasons why the child is more easily taught by one method than by another, and as to what the best method is. If this sympathy is lacking, their criticisms, which, from their greater breadth of view, should be of such inestimable advantage both to the teachers and scholars, are entirely thrown away.

Now, I venture to say, that after having heard Mrs. Ward's two lessons on arithmetic, those members who were present will be on the watch to find out in what way their children are being taught the properties of number. I think they will not be satisfied until they are taught by a method that commends itself to their reason.

Another day Mrs. Ward gave us a most delightful lesson on "Why and How to Cultivate the Artistic Faculty in Children." She showed us how the foundations of the artistic faculty are laid in very early years by teaching children to observe; how their senses of touch and sight must be trained to be accurate and discriminating to notice colour, grouping, and texture; and how, at the same time, children should be taught to express their ideas by brushwork, drawing, modelling, and building—for what a child begins to try to represent, that he begins to understand. Mrs. Ward also spoke of the difficulty in estimating the worth of children's artistic attempts, and the need of true and sympathetic criticism. She warned her hearers against possible discouragement, and advised them to clearly show their appreciation of any care and industry displayed, so that the child might be guided and stimulated to fresh efforts.

I think I have said enough to show parents how much fresh light Mrs. Ward threw on this question, and on their own attitudes to their children's efforts. Should we not be careful in our super-

vision of this part of education, seeing how large are its possibilities?

Mrs. Ward also gave a lesson on "Children's Stories, Games, and Songs," and suggested many tests by which to discover their value.

Mrs. Ward said that one of the merits of a story is that it should influence the child by the power of example.

But the real power of example lies in the special inspiration to some particular principle of conduct, and one should not allow a child to think an example is a pattern to be copied, and thus unduly stimulate them to a spurious life. For this reason, the time and place of the story should be different to our own, as, for instance, the parable of "the Good Samaritan."

Mrs. Ward also pointed out that in games a "free romp" is not good, because it does not result in well-being for all. Organised games are very good for children, as affording much insight into character and many opportunities for self-discipline, ethical training, and physical exercise.

Mrs. Ingham Brooke, a friend of Mrs. Ward, who had been lecturing on education in America as well as in England, had promised to give us two lessons on "Nature Teaching." We looked forward to these with great interest, although we hardly understood the importance of the subject.

Mrs. Brooke showed that Natural Science cannot be taught with advantage to children without understanding the great fundamental truths taught by Froebel and other great educators—viz.:

(1) That the faculties should be trained before facts are taught.

(2) That only the knowledge gained by his own observation is of use to the child.

Both these principles demand much faith and patience in the teacher. Faith in the "unseen product," the growth of faculties and development of character. Patience, that the knowledge which apparently could be so easily given to the child should be gradually arrived at by the child himself, by allowing him to form, and guiding him in forming, his own conclusions.

I think the patience needed was fully appreciated by the mothers present, as we all know the temptation quietly to "tell the child" instead of leading him to find out.

But to those parents who are convinced that education is not

limited to schoolroom hours, Nature Teaching comes as a part of education in which the parents are peculiarly fitted to share. The child is on our side from the first. His love of the natural world is always keen, and his observing powers are great. The parents have only to give the child lessons on flowers or animals to find this out, and they will be surprised at the end of a few months, during which Nature lessons have been regularly given, how great are the advantages to themselves and to the child, and that they are links which bind the schoolroom and everyday life together.

I should like to tell you some of the results which Mrs. Brooke assured us may be expected from Nature Teaching.

(1) The power of seeing will greatly increase. Children are naturally quick to see, and this inherent capacity *grows less* from *want of use and training*. This is a startling view for us, when we consider how anxious we are to make our children's capabilities as large as possible.

(2) The child will acquire an understanding of imagery and language. Nature Teaching helps him to learn the word and its meaning together, so that they are never disunited. Imagery becomes real to the child when he understands the reference to objects in Nature. Mrs. Brooke gave an interesting illustration of this last point. She gave a class of children lessons on all the animals mentioned in "Hiawatha" for a whole term. The next term she taught the children to recite the poem, and no one could doubt that to the children the poem was full of meaning and a source of intellectual pleasure.

(3) The study of Nature will give a keen appreciation of art. The mind of the child will become so stored with beautiful forms, that his taste will thereby be formed to love the beautiful and turn from the unlovely.

(4) The life spent out of doors will become much more full. The child will be taught to notice the form and colour of trees in summer and winter, to watch for birds and insects, to compare the shapes of leaves, and to make collections which accumulate solely by the child's own exertion and gradual knowledge.

(5) Composition will be greatly facilitated. A child taught to write all he knows about an animal or a flower, after a few lessons on the subject, and when his mind is full

of facts found out by his own observation and thoroughly understood, will have no difficulty in "*what* to say," only in "*how* to say it!"

(6) The law of consequences. Use and disuse will have to be pointed out to the child, and his attention called to it in many ways, that it may sink deep into his mind, and the lesson that "what a man sows that he will reap" will not be forgotten.

(7) The child's spiritual nature will be developed and strengthened in the way most gradual and unforced. As he sees the reverence and skill with which his parents unfold to him the manipulation of God's thought and will, the child will be led up Nature's great pathway to God, and impressions of reverence, love, and obedience will be awakened and associated with the strongest and earliest pleasures.

We began to see, from Mrs. Brooke's lectures, that we cannot leave the child to Nature, even though there be an instinctive love for it, but that we must guide and develop it; and, as Miss Shirreff says in her interesting book, "The Kindergarten at Home," "it is the part of a good teacher to give permanence to the impressions by opening up new sources of interest and pleasure in each object, by leading the child to observe, to compare, to learn something new about it and its relations to other objects, and *thereby* making *his instinctive tendencies* the means of moral and intellectual training." Elsewhere Miss Shirreff says: "The impressions that are transient may remain utterly barren for any real culture of the heart, the imagination, or the understanding."

After Mrs. Brooke had finished her lecture we gathered around her to tell her our difficulties, for those of us who were most convinced of the truths contained in the lecture were most in despair. We had to confess to a lamentable want of knowledge of natural science. Mrs. Brooke said she would very strongly urge us to begin giving our children Nature lessons in spite of this, for she assured us we could and should carefully prepare a lesson once a week, taking any one side of the subject that interested us most. Mrs. Brooke told as that she herself never gave a Nature lesson without preparation, and that with the help of a good book on natural science for children we could *all* of us give the lessons. She told us to remember that skill and

knowledge in doing this would come gradually, and we should find a rich reward to ourselves.

Mrs. Brooke recommended us to get one of three books by Miss Arabella Buckley—"Life and her Children," "Winners in Life's Race," and "The Fairyland of Science," and, if possible, to procure pictures or objects to illustrate our lesson.

I think it will be readily admitted that this course of lessons was on thoroughly practical lines. I have not touched on other interesting subjects about which Mrs. Ward gave us most valuable teaching and enlightenment. I may briefly state them: "Methods of Teaching," "Concrete Geography," "The Place of Manual Work in primary and later Teaching."

Nor have I time to tell how Mrs. Ward made her class go through most—if not all—the "occupations" so loved by children under seven or eight years of age. Mrs. Ward wished us to do these things ourselves; and we proved the truth of her words, that you cannot really understand the meaning of an occupation, or put yourself in a child's place, until you have experienced the same feelings, and can *feel* you understand them.

Mrs. Ward explained that we should look in all work, not for utility alone, but for training and developing the child's powers, and towards giving him "a foundation" (I quote Miss Shirreff again) "of good mental habits and manual dexterity, so that when the hour for actual labour arrives, and there is no leisure for the acquisition of such habits, the child will quickly master ordinary work, and be fit to learn some higher kind of special work."

Mrs. Ward also answered that frequent objection of "how a child is ever to learn to pay attention to what is difficult in later life if he has in early years been taught by means of things that he likes?" She said that what seemed to *us* easy lessons are not easy to a child if they cause him to apply himself with great earnestness and care, and that interesting does not mean easy; they are only exactly suited to the age, and teach the very habits of application and attention that we thought would only be obtained by learning more difficult but uninteresting lessons. Mrs. Ward showed how children's involuntary attention should be trained from the earliest years, and that voluntary attention will be the natural and inevitable outcome.

I have said enough about these lessons to show that they were of great value, and that they helped to clear our rather confused

ideas on the new methods of modern education ; but, in conclusion, I should like to suggest that classes of a similar kind should be formed wherever there is a branch of the P.N.E.U. A few earnest mothers would have little difficulty in arranging a course of lessons to be given in the same easy way on such matters as Physiology, History, Arithmetic, Nature Teaching Modelling, &c.

All the subjects which may be taught to our children in a lifeless and essentially uneducational way, and be therefore utterly barren of real culture, may be, and ought to be, taught in the only true and scientific way. In future we shall be in a position to superintend the education of our children from the enlightened standpoint of people who have studied the question.

I think we can no longer consider education as only a "matter of opinion," or of rival "systems." The fact that there is a Science of Education imposes on all parents the duty of studying, at any rate, its elements.

[The Editor earnestly hopes that "Mothers' Training Classes" on this delightful pattern will be established in many centres. Such classes were part of the original scheme of the P.N.E.U.]

THE

PARENTS' REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF HOME-TRAINING AND CULTURE.

"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

THE INFLUENCE AND TEACHING OF THE EDUCATED MOTHER.*

MRS. ALFRED BOOTH.

IN dealing with an abstract subject one hardly knows how to approach it in the most practical and profitable manner. If in this short paper I fail to do this, it will be owing to my want of originality, and not the fault of a most interesting and instructive subject.

The family, the oldest human institution, is as important a factor to-day as in the beginnings of life on this planet. I am in fact inclined to think it is even more important than in any past age, because we are able to look at it in a reasonable manner. The family to-day, like every other institution of divine or human origin, is on its trial. Shall the family stand, or shall it, like so many churches and governments, alter its constitution and be a less sacred thing in the future than it has been in the past?

While recognising that there is no reason why with proper reverence we should not discuss the family and its foundations, let me say at once, it is entirely on the ground of its divine

* Paper read at Bristol Conference of Women Workers. Reprinted by kind permission of Bristol Ladies' Association for the Care of Girls.

origin and inalienable rights I approach my particular subject of the Educated Mother, her Teaching and Influence.

What, then, is education? Who is the educated mother? What ought her teaching and influence to be?

What is education? We are apt to think we know very well what education is, and when asked this question give an answer which we hope will satisfy ourselves and others. When, however, we begin to think seriously on the subject we are surprised to find how dim and hazy our opinions are, and we cannot be satisfied until we try to classify them and arrive at some definite conclusions. Speaking of education therefore in reference to women as mothers, I should venture to say its first and prime object ought to be to make women think, and that all education which does not tend to make thinking easy and natural fails of its object and is not education.

The original meaning of the word educate is to draw forth; education should therefore aim at drawing forth all the different powers of human beings. True education should train the intellect, establish principles, and regulate the heart. In answering the question, what is education?—especially in reference to girls—I would strike this threefold cord, believing that if the intellect is trained to habits of thought by the development of its faculties, the conscience to the perception of the reasonableness of principles founded on intelligible moral laws, and the heart to a wise regulation of its spontaneous action, we may hope for results which will be most likely to prepare women for the particular duties and responsibilities which motherhood brings.

The whole question of the education of women is still in its infancy. I am speaking now in a broad sense, and wish to include all women, and not the favoured class only, who can easily obtain all advantages. In former days there were, of course, many examples of highly educated women, whose names rise at once to our minds; but the idea that education, in an all-round sense, is the birthright of women as well as men was not a recognised fact.

The Puritan Fathers of American Independence established schools for boys at once on the foundation of the New England colonies in 1620, but there is no mention of schools for girls until 1771.

If women could boil potatoes, spin, and bear healthy children, it was considered, even in the land where education is now—crude though it *may* be—more widely spread than in any other country, that their education was complete. An extract from the records of some New England towns will emphasise this :

"In 1778 the town of Northampton in New England voted not to be at any expense for schooling girls. Upon an appeal to the Courts, the town was indicted and fined for its neglect. Within the memory of a resident of Hatfield, an influential citizen, whose children were girls, appealed in town meeting for the privilege of sending them to the public school, which he helped by his taxes to support. An indignant fellow-townsman sprang to his feet and exclaimed, 'Hatfield school-girls, never!' In New England in 1790 it was proposed that three or four schools for girls might be established, which were to be furnished with dames to 'learn' them, as they expressed it, good manners, and proper decency of behaviour. These were to be essentials, but in addition they were to be taught spelling and reading sufficient to read the Bible, and, if the parents desired it, needlework and knitting. The session of the schools was to be from April to October, but a later petition being presented to the town, it graciously voted that some further arrangement be made for instruction of girls, and that during the summer months, when the boys are diminished in numbers, the masters shall receive the girls, after the boys are dismissed, for instruction in reading and grammar."

What a contrast the widespread educational ideas in reference to women in the United States of America and here present to-day! We are emancipated from the blindness, ignorance and prejudice of the past, but it would be strange indeed if the best minds of the day should not still find much to reconsider and develop before we can arrive at the wisest and best methods for the education of women.

Who, then, is the educated mother? The educated mother is pre-eminently a woman who thinks, and the results of her regulated thought will be seen in the daily administration of her home.

Happily, the educated mother can be found now in all classes of society, and her presence need not be confined to homes of wealth and ease.

Every mother should have some knowledge of physiology, of hygiene, or the science of life, of the exact technical sciences, of sewing and cookery, and some distinct notions of domestic economy. It is humiliating to notice how frequently young women, who are enjoying the privilege of maternity for the first time, calmly announce their ignorance of infant life, its necessities and demands. Their only resource is the resignation of their children during the period of infancy to the care of nurses and nursery-maids, who, without the education of their mistresses, are still better trained in the nursery management of the young than the mother herself. How many nurseries are there throughout England which the mother does not enter without giving warning of her approach, and where the nurse reigns supreme?

Not that I would wish to introduce the American and French system of turning the whole house into a nursery, allowing the children to roam at will through the different rooms, but I would urge that the educated mother's proper place is alike nurseries and entertaining-rooms, and, if she wishes to feel herself equally at home above as below stairs in the precincts of her own home, she must step across its magic threshold with some knowledge of the laws of human life, and should have studied physiology with a view of her own destiny as a possible wife and mother, and, in any case, a member of a human community, where to women, married and unmarried, is confided the early training of boys and girls.

The educated mother should have some plain ideas of life as it really is. Reality, not ideality, should be the watchword with which she starts her life-work. No right-minded woman can begin the double life with its intense interests and absorbing duties without the blest vision of an ideal home rising before her; but I would urge her to change the word ideal into real, and lo! she will find the real home is the ideal, for it is only through the actual we can attain to the spiritual.

The influence and teaching of the educated mother must begin in the nursery. Most of, if not all, the habits and tendencies in our children which trouble us and them when they are grown up can be modified and counteracted in the nursery. There is a favourite expression often used, "It is my nature and I cannot change it." This is a fatal mistake; nature is here used to

denote inherited qualities, and these can be altered by environment and education.

It is the mother's duty to recognise that while her children may show fresh traits of unexpected excellence or difficulty they will also be sure to show characteristics which she recognises are theirs by inheritance, and it will be the first aim of her nursery instructions to direct, counteract and balance these inherited tendencies, while she watches keenly for fresh departures in their moral as well as physical development.

Guyau, a young French physiological and philosophic writer, too soon lost to this world, whose admirable little book on "Education and Heredity," published in the Contemporary Science Series, it would be well for all mothers to read, says: "Most parents bring up their children for their own sakes and not for their children's sake, some for the pleasure of the child as estimated by the child"—(there is a profound truth underlying this); "true education is disinterested; it brings up the child for its own sake, it also brings it up for its country's sake, and the human race as a whole." Again he says: "All education should be directed to this end to convince the child that he is capable of good and incapable of evil, in order to render him actually so." These words may remind us that in our own childhood the sentiment uppermost in the minds of our educators was the reverse of this: "Convince the child that he is utterly depraved if you wish him to long after goodness," was too often the expression of their inward thought. Do not let us be afraid of the modern way of instilling love of goodness into the life-blood of the child. Remember the greatest Teacher must have been of this opinion when He said, "Their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven"; "Whosoever offendeth one of these little ones, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hung about his neck and he were cast into the depths of the sea"; "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Happy the mother who can herself superintend the home life of her infant children, but if not able to do this let her take great pains in the choice of nurse and companions.

If there be one thing more than another which is of intense interest to the educated mother it is the manners of her children.

Sons and daughters alike are sources of anxiety in this respect, for if manners make the man, good manners in a woman are more to be desired. What do we mean by manners? The word comes from *manus*, "a hand," and may technically be said to refer to the way in which a thing is handled, and is therefore the way of performing or handling anything. We say everything depends upon how a thing is handled; almost anything can be done if it is handled rightly. What an idea of power does this not give in regard to manner, and what an important part the cultivation of manners plays in education, at home, at school, and in the world. There is a prevalent idea in England, not to be found, so far as I know, in other countries, that courteous manners may be an indication of insincerity. There is a certain class of minds upon which the best manners have this effect; they at once ask the question, "Is he or she sincere"?

When first coming in contact with this view of good manners, one is startled, and for a time carried captive by its special pleading for truth. It is asserted where no special interest in a person is felt, it is a violation of truth to greet such person, or in fact any stranger, with a smile of friendliness, or a genial, sympathetic appearance. But we must not forget, when attracted by this cold, truthful view of manners, to perceive there is a deeper principle lying below the fundamental one of Truth, and that is Love. The effect of a cold, blunt manner is to produce a chilling effect on those who are acted upon, whereas the loving or genial manner creates in the recipient a feeling of pleasure akin to Love, and must be really the more truthful of the two, for God is Love, and has made the foundations of His Universe to rest on Love and Truth. Kant advocates this greeting of others as though we loved them, and argues its advantages are great, because it calls forth love on both sides. The difference in the children in one family in regard to manners is often marked. We say, "This child has naturally good manners, and that has no manners."

Practically is it not almost always the good-tempered, happy-dispositioned child who shows early in life the right mode of handling people and things, and is it not the more honest, straightforward child who gives us most trouble in the handling of people and things? The educated mother must therefore

make Love the ground of her instructions and example, and while she fixes the courteous child's mode of action on this attribute of God Himself, she will be especially careful to train the uncourteous child in this simple idea of Love and its eternal union with Truth. What "God has joined together let not man put asunder." One of the most spontaneously well-mannered of English High-School head-mistresses said to me not long ago: "If a child, particularly a boy, be not taught to be courteous from one to ten years of age, he will never be truly courteous. The habit may be acquired later, but will never be spontaneous." The educated mother must influence quietly in this matter by her own manners, and the way in which she exemplifies the principles of love and truth. Hard and unnecessary judgments of others in the presence of children are an offence to good taste and manners, and very injurious, as tending to encourage the uselessly critical spirit.

The educated mother must, however, be much more than a nursery machine and a technical instructress. Realising that the children of to-day will rapidly develop into individuals keen to learn and be taught, she will always be alive to the necessity of cultivating her own mind, and the work of self-education and improvement will go on for her while life lasts. It is absolutely necessary a mother should know how to care for the small bodies, but it is equally important she should understand and satisfy the unfolding intellects of her children. It is a painful spectacle, that of a mother who has allowed her children to outstrip her as thinking beings, and can no longer keep pace with them in their pursuits and interests. The educated mother knows this, and will keep well in touch with all the interests of life. Religion, politics, social and philanthropic problems are all of absorbing interest to her, and she recognises she can keep her children's confidence, some of whom probably are cleverer than herself, only by habits of thoughtful interest in all which concerns humanity.

Beyond this the educated mother will seek to prepare her sons and daughters for that trying period in their lives when, emerging from childhood, they stand on the threshold of woman and manhood, oppressed often by new, bewildering thoughts, and open to guidance in a peculiarly sensitive and receptive

manner. For this critical period the mother has already prepared herself by her knowledge of laws human and divine, and she earnestly endeavours to be herself the guide of her developing children. Had I been writing this paper ten years ago I should have been very sure that to all her children alike the educated mother would speak early in life in reference to these sacred subjects. Age, and a wider experience of life, have, however, modified my views in this respect, and I feel it a matter on which one cannot dogmatise. If mothers can secure and keep the confidence of sons and daughters, they will be guided to instruct and warn aright. But of this I am absolutely sure—that their warnings must be based on knowledge, else they will not be received and believed in.

But there is a subject which may be mentioned in this connection where the influence of the mother should be great, and different, as it seems to me, from what it now is. I refer to modesty in dress as well as in manner. There are two things which strike the American sojourner in Europe. One is that table-manners in Germany are no criterion of mental refinement and education, and that even in France, where culinary skill is carried into the realm of art, the consumer is not always an artist in his way of eating. The other thing is, that in England immodesty in dress is no criterion of immodesty in thought or deed. In plain words, a truly Christian, philanthropic, absolutely pure-minded woman will in England wear low gowns, which would, in the United States—and I am bound to say in France also—stamp her as a fast woman. Now we all know perfectly well that the standard in this matter is not the same in this country. A lady may appear in the evening with a dress so low it cannot fail to be observed, and yet that same lady is engaged all the year round in self-denying, Christian and public work, and never intentionally offends in word or deed against the ethical will of Christ or the moral law of Moses.

"Les femmes Anglaises sont les prudes, mais les prudes immodestes," said a witty Frenchman. Will you translate and reflect on this axiom?

Now what is the explanation of this curious anomaly? In England, where education and refinement are so widespread, the higher you rise in the social scale the more likely are you to find

mothers quite unconscious of the influence they ought to exercise over their daughters in regard to this matter.

With some exceptions, I venture to say that, in aristocratic circles, low dressing is *de rigueur*.

There can, it seems to me, be no manner of doubt this fashion is one of the consequences of a monarchical system, and this fashion being prevalent at Court, no radical change will ever take place until the example is set by royalty.

A visit to the Stuart and Hanoverian Portrait Gallery in two successive seasons seemed to show me why the Queen does not take a different stand. She has all her life long been surrounded by portraits of ancestors dressed in quaint low bodices, exposing more of bosom to the gaze of posterity than is really modest, and as she was never, I suppose, educated to feel this a question of practical ethics, but merely one of conventional suitability, she has never altered Court dress to suit the higher moral tone of the England of to-day.

The Court of Queen Victoria will go down to posterity as one of the purest in history. What a benefit to Society it would be if the fashion of immodest dressing could receive the disapproval of a Sovereign whose influence and teaching extend over so great a part of the civilised world, whether we, who, without being "les prudes Anglaises," are still of opinion that beauty as well as morality should dictate the cut of a gown, can do anything to influence custom in this matter, is an important question; as educated mothers, however, our duty towards our daughters is so plain that he who runs may read.

In regard to love and marriage the influence of the educated mother may be boundless. The educated, refined household is hardly likely to fall into vulgarity of thought and speech in reference to these subjects, but the tone must be set by the mother early in life. A low level of speech about the sweet intimacies of childhood, the foolish anticipating of relationships which come to maturity later on in life should hardly be indulged in. Families which have neglected wise reticence when the children were young can always be recognised; for in them the tone, when sons and daughters are growing up and taking the initiative, is apt to be an offence to good taste and refinement. Following the mother's lead, the father will not fail to be in accord with her wishes,

and the result will be natural belief on the children's part in love as the foundation of family life, and marriage as its natural consequence. A mother once said, in speaking of a young girl who had spent months in her family, "Not a word has she heard while with us of love and marriage." Surely a mistake this, for however anxious we may be to ignore these human subjects, we find they assert themselves, and it is far wiser to encourage reasonable talk between parents and children, than to drive our children to discuss life and its most sacred human interests with their young friends of both sexes.

In conclusion, the influence and teaching of the educated mother is all for righteousness; and the formation in her children of character, based on self-control and self-sacrifice, the daily object of her life.

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"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline of life."

A MOTHER'S LETTER.

How do I do it? This question has been from time to time in my mind, since your pleasant visit to us in our country home. A big house, and in it a big party of eight amenable children—that is all.

The work of guidance is comparatively light when the boys are not at home. The long habit of being ruled firmly, though lightly, has made them all what they are: obedient and tractable, though full of spirit and life.

We have occasional atmospheric disturbances, but they ruffle the surface only—the deep water runs smoothly. How do I do it?

When I was a young mother, I always thought "What would *my* mother have done, or said, under such circumstances?" and I acted accordingly.

For many years, being much with my children was a distinct effort of duty. I have always had an intense love of reading and self-improvement of all kinds—drawing, painting, music, books old and new; my own interests were too intense not to make it otherwise than an effort of duty to give much time to my children. Whatever you may think, I am not by any

means a "devoted mother," but no doubt my very absorption in my many and varied interests (though they were undertaken solely for my own gratification, and because I had myself been brought up to care for such things), was an unconscious training for the work, which I am quite ready *now* to admit, to be a chief end and aim of a woman's existence—*i.e.* the training of the children entrusted to her.

Admitting this much however, I still maintain that this training is not to be more than one out of other ends and aims in life, though, as I said before—a chief one. We owe much to other duties, and Society in its broad and Catholic sense, would be vapid indeed if all mothers were so occupied with maternal duties, as to be unavailable for social intercourse with other men and women. This very limitation is I think, part of the judicious training of children; out of principle I have always made my children consider mine and their father's comfort and convenience first, and I must say this has succeeded, in so far as I think they are more considerate and unselfish towards their parents than most of the children I know.

I used to hate teaching, but now it interests me. I have always taught the daily bible or prayer-book lessons to the younger children myself; but except drawing, I have taught nothing else systematically, though of course much incidentally. The children's ordinary education has been carried on by governesses under my supervision, and the boys of course have been to school, but as regards them, the help and co-operation we have received from the master of the private school where they have been, has been a powerful aid in the formation of their characters, and in the sequence of their individual treatment. This entire confidence between master and parents as to the boys' characters, and great frankness in the Reports sent, I consider to be simply indispensable to their wise bringing up.

The great disadvantage of their lives, being broken up into periods, having little or no continuity one with the other, is thus minimised as far as is possible, though at the best the life of a boy at school must remain to a great degree strange to his mother. If this is so at a private school, it is to a far greater extent at a public one; this life is almost a sealed book to those at home. Now and again a glimpse between

the leaves reveals a world of duties, pleasures, temptations, and self control, which brings home to one's mind with a shock, the fact of one's boy being tried in the fire, and one can only hope and pray that he may come out of the ordeal unsinged by the flame. One's helplessness to aid is the less great, when one remembers how much may be done by Intercession—but truly these weak children are often heroes, "greater than those who have taken Cities."

You know what a tribe we have! but I have always tried to have from time to time my children singly with me; and ever since they have been at school I have made a point of having "talks" with my boys. I find they always welcome a suggestion that they should come to me for one of these "talks." I have made it a habit for years to go to my room for an hour every evening before dinner, where, on my sofa, I take a much needed rest, for my life is a very busy one. Here at this time they come to me and on a low stool by my side they sit, and we talk. Some of my children talk freely, others leave it to me to do most of that, but gradually they get interested and "thaw." One of my boys takes a long time to thaw, but the process takes place sooner or later, and he is all the sweeter for the slowness of his confidence. Some of these talks are as great a mental effort as that of reading a stiff book, and I never begin one of them without asking for help and guidance, and often throughout the time they last, claim the aid and inspiration of words that never fail to follow.

The children never expect a "preaching" I believe, nor do they ever have their confidence forced, and sometimes these talks end without any apparent object being gained. We always begin with mundane affairs; generally we discuss the pets or some interesting occupation upon which they are engaged—or else they like merely to be caressed and "smoothed." Sometimes I scold them briskly for some fault or neglect. Sometimes we talk of their futures—of life and its battles—and sometimes I tell them of my own old days—but we manage to make the best of our opportunities, and the talk generally bears fruit. I think such talks may be a bulwark to a boy entering on life. My boys know that so long as we are left to each other we shall always have them. They know that anything wrong could scarcely be concealed from me—that I should see it in their faces, and that "murder

will out." Please God this thought may be a stay and preventive from evil.

The girls are different, my little pair of nine and eleven also have their talks. They have as yet no desire for privacy. Each other's presence does not check their confidence. They are amusingly open. They discuss their own and each other's foibles and relate their little experiences in self-rule exercises, a small boy of eight listening, and making a running accompaniment of quaint remarks upon his own and their characters and experiences. His sisters do their best to reduce him to the level they consider he should occupy from his youth and inexperience, but the small lord of creation is conscious of the superiority of his sex.

The children's father has so far left their management mostly to me, but his unfailing support of my authority and his insistence on absolute obedience to us both, has made my task easy. "Obedience and no argument" he has always exacted, and it never occurs to the children big or little, that his or my will can be disputed when once the law is laid down. But we drive them with a light hand and their father's unfailing kindness and justice have made him truly their friend and referee, for they are thoroughly appreciative of his strong and manly character, and would perhaps tell you with some pride, how that when a boy at Harrow he was for three years head of his house—the last year remaining on by special request "because his influence was so good." This may seem little to us, but I think the echo of the old influence that was then thought useful, may be none the less so now, years afterwards; and may well be a source of pride and emulation to the old "head boy's" sons!

I think self control is the great secret of influence and authority in Parents. The absolute accord—perfect love and confidence, and unfailing *good temper* between their Father and Mother that they ought always to see, should be a perpetual model and pattern of what their own future lives ought some day to be. There is no training in self control such as one's own children give one. One lives in a blaze of light, one's every action is seen and unconsciously influences. One *must* always be serene, good tempered, unselfish, courteous, reticent, just, charitable. From living one's life so much in public, *posing* to the children as models of all they should

copy, one is, I think, trained oneself. One finds this I think a strain and an effort for a time. Cultivated people have to sacrifice a great deal in living much in the society of children. They must either repress the children more than is good for them, or sacrifice much conversation and intercourse that is above the children's heads.

The society of husband and wife when at home and without guests, is only gradually broken in upon by the growing up of their children, so that the change is hardly realized, and I think it is the suddenness of this breaking in that often tries a stepmother to a degree that, unless she has the sweetest of tempers, strains her relations with her stepchildren. I think if men who marry a second time would remember this, and spare their young wives more, they would help both them and the children much. Unfortunately most men who have families marry a second time, because they cannot get on without a mistress to their household, and a mother to their children, whereas the second wife marries her husband for himself, and not for his children.

I think an "elder sister" is a great help and influence in a family. My eldest girl has latterly been of the greatest assistance to me. With a devoted affection for her brothers, and while apparently in most things giving up her wishes and desires to please them, she never fails to influence them for good with the intuitive tact and instinct, which is a woman's special gift in dealing with men. It is well that a girl should acquire this tact while young, for on it depends much of her happiness and power for good in later life. I think indeed my little daughter is learning at home much of what in other ways you impart to your band of enthusiastic little maidens at Ambleside—she is both learning to train and being trained.

You see from all I have told you that we are rather a homogeneous "whole." We act upon and educate each other, tho' I think we ourselves do not approach *your* ideal of parents. Indeed, did we do so, we should perhaps neglect other duties, and they are great and many. As you may imagine, this being the case, I rejoice in the possession of our dear good "Mademoiselle" whom you know. Truly, "great wits jump," and she is quite a kindred spirit with you.

But you will forgive me a little criticism. Are not your

"beautiful mothers" a little spoiling to the children, and sometimes perhaps rather a trial to other people? Are they not sometimes somewhat too cheap—too much and too often the servants of their children? I say advisedly "their servants;" they serve their children insomuch as this is the bent and end of their existence, being mothers. A reaction was bound to come, but perhaps the educationist of this day deals too exclusively with the duties of parents to children. Must we not remember that if the children are accustomed to "be considered" always and not "to consider," this perhaps may defeat its own object when the next generation comes to be trained up? Granted, that in the old days of repressive child training, this object of the duty of children to their parents was strained to breaking point. Child life was clouded, overshadowed by fear, misunderstanding, harsh misconceptions, onerous rules. Parents' love and sympathy was swallowed up, drowned in etiquette and misjudged severity. But barring the lack of tenderness and sympathy (which scarcely existed, and when it did was considered a weakness), this method of education certainly often turned out fine and noble men, and sweet, well disciplined women. The sweetest and noblest woman I ever knew had a mother who absolutely neglected her children (in so far as personal intercourse was concerned) until they were old enough to be interesting, which was when they were able to sympathise and take part in her own intellectual and artistic pursuits.

I think we need a *juste milieu* between these two extremes. The children should not be trained with the idea that they can possibly be the *first* object with their parents. First and foremost the mother should make all give way to the father's comfort and convenience. She should show how much they owe to him, how he toils for herself and them—how often (perchance) he denies himself what otherwise might be his, but for what he does for them—their education, pleasures, health and what not. On the other hand, the father's tender care of "the mother," his courtesy to her, his chivalrous treatment of her woman's nature and (perhaps) weak body—should teach the boys unconsciously to themselves, that reverence and tenderness for woman, which even Miss Cobb and Co. have been unable to deprive the generality of well bred Englishmen.

I thank God my children have succeeded to a heritage of a good and honest race; it is a superlative privilege. When He comes to bind up His sheaves I think we may find many of our children's sins visited upon us! We indeed, in the light of modern science, owe pretty nearly as much to our children before they are born as we do to them afterwards—yes! and to our children's children. Do not let us allow our love and duty to our children run to seed. Love and unselfishness in mothers is pretty, sweet, and very edifying, but if we wish to train up men and women to do their duty in their turn, our rule must be absolute and bracing, tender and sympathetic in turn. We must even sometimes deprive them of innocent amusements and pleasures if they interfere with our own comfort or convenience. If we deny ourselves for them, we must exact that they also should do the same for us, and perhaps the acceptance of such self-sacrifice is a considerable one in itself.

But when I urge a "bracing treatment" I do not for one moment regret those dead methods and cruel trainings of the past. Only, let us rule absolutely, howbeit tenderly. The best drivers drive with "a light hand," and women can ride with ease some horses who fret under the heavier hand of a man. In this connection I may say I have found the *hand* a curiously effectual instrument in dealing with my children. The close affinity between children and parents can be greatly intensified by touch. I do not believe that this exists only between certain parents and children. I believe that any mother's hand, provided it is tender and strong in touching, can create a sensitive current between the two natures that not only exists at the moment, but that will last in memory, and its influence be brought back by association in after times. It has a distinct physical effect on my children and this I have seen react upon their nerves and tempers.

Last, and not least, our "light" should shine very brightly in the children's eyes. I know a man who has been through the fire of many and heavy troubles. His mother is old and very deaf, but is the more spiritually beautiful. Since his childhood this man has nightly gone to her room early or late to bid her goodnight, and he says "the mother at prayers" is the most beautiful sight he knows. Let the light shine. We English are such a reserved race, we willingly hide it

under the bushel, the more perhaps the brighter it be. Let us allow our boys to see the longing sometimes of "Thy Kingdom come," and know why! (I can see the wonder and awe in my boys' eyes now). They cannot understand *that* now in their health and strength and hope of life, but they will someday. In seeing us "love Jesus" they will learn to love Him too; and that love has kept armies at bay!

I think no one can make hard and fast rules as to the treatment of children in general—they must be treated individually. One's only general rule I think should be that of Love. Whatever we do to them or for them, let us always let them see and know that we are always loving them.

MOTHERS AS SICK NURSES.

By Alice Powell.

Now-a-days, in cases of acute illness the services of a professional sick nurse are considered almost as indispensable as the attendance of a doctor; and since nursing the sick is a science requiring especial study and experience it is well that amateur nursing should be on the decline.

Nevertheless, it is only natural that mothers should often prefer nursing their sick children themselves; and that children should cling to their mothers in times of sickness is also only natural.

The question then is—Who makes the best nurse for children, the well-trained stranger or the less skilled mother?

When health is at stake we are apt to say, somewhat hastily, that sentiment must be put on one side, that the bodily welfare of the patient should alone claim our attention. But experience goes to prove that sentiment is a great moral force, and as such cannot be ignored in illness nor in health.

The tie existing between mother and child is too intimate to be lightly treated; and this being so, it is obvious that where the mother's technical skill is sufficient, where her influence over the child is good, and where her strength of mind, as well as her strength of body, is equal to the task, she is the best nurse for her ailing child. If she determine, for the time being, to be a sick-nurse first and a mother afterwards, all will be well. On the other hand, when the mother lacks the requisite qualities of a sick-nurse she must relinquish the sweet satisfaction of tending her children herself, and must deliver them up to one better fitted for the work. Spoiled children, who are unmanageable in health,

do not become more tractable in sickness. Illness may cow the spirits but it does not alter the disposition; and as illness is not the time to correct former errors of training it is often imperative to call in outside help, for the simple reason that the mother has no power to enforce the necessary obedience. The strange nurse has no leeway to make up, and so can at once exact implicit obedience, thus ensuring the well-being of the patient and the comfort of the child.

Children are more difficult patients to treat than adults, because they are less able to define their symptoms, to express their feelings and to locate pain.

For these reasons the amateur nursing of sick children is often a risky performance. The nurse has to incorporate herself, as it were, with the patient. She must express his feelings accurately. Her report of his condition must not be based upon mere surmise, but upon actual knowledge.

Children are, however, more placid under treatment than older people; and this is in their favour. They are not often troubled with nervous fears about their condition; their recovery is not impeded by mental worries, and they have implicit faith in the doctor's ability to cure them.

The correct diagnosis of children's ailments, often a difficult matter, may be retarded by vague suppositions or accelerated by accurate information. The past history of a patient is an important factor in the diagnosis of disease.

The time and place when symptoms of illness first appeared, what those premonitory symptoms were, and what, apparently, occasioned them: the child's normal habits must be compared with his present abnormal condition: the state of his appetite, his temper; even the abandoning of, or clinging to, favourite toys, are all things which need to be carefully noticed. Nothing is of no consequence. Often a point is missed because trivialities, so called, are pooh-poohed by the doctor. Where children are concerned, important issues hang on the tiniest threads; and this is especially noticeable in any brain trouble. Therefore, accurate observation and attention to the minutest detail is imperative.

Children locate pain badly, and mothers should be alive to the consequent inaccuracy of their statements; for often a slight indisposition develops into a serious illness through symptoms being mistaken and wrongly treated. We would

impress upon all mothers the necessity of learning to diagnose children's diseases correctly. Doctors are not always at hand, and valuable time is frequently lost through ignorance in this particular.

Children's illnesses often occur very suddenly, and are consequently the more alarming. It should be remembered that fear is contagious, but that children do not fear illness as older people do because their experience of it is limited. To show oneself alarmed is therefore bad policy. It not only increases present evil, but gives rise to future trouble. To rush about in a distracted manner, calling in father, aunts, servants, to interview the child; trying a variety of remedies with neither rhyme nor reason, does the child an infinity of harm. Such behaviour excites him, frightens him and gives him just cause to doubt the efficacy of all subsequent treatment. The exercise of a little self-control and common sense on the mother's part, when symptoms of illness first appear, would tend to obviate that wholesale demoralisation which frequently attacks a household in times of serious illness.

Children who are old enough to reason, should be treated as reasonable beings in sickness as in health. Implicit obedience is essential, but it need not be arbitrarily exacted.

Children like to know what is the matter with them, they like to have their feelings explained, and they like to be told in what way the treatment they are undergoing will do them good. Above all, they want the active sympathy which our experience can alone give them. It is comforting to a child to know that what he suffers we have also suffered; that we have felt pain as acute as that which he has to bear, and that we know how painful it is to swallow with an ulcerated throat.

To carry out this sympathetic treatment consistently, and we maintain that it is the best, the kindest and the most satisfactory mode of treatment, we should ourselves try the remedies we have to apply to them. We should taste the medicine, to see if it be nauseous. We should test the heat of a poultice on ourselves to make sure that it is not too hot. If an unpleasant operation has to be performed — as the syringing of ears — it is distinctly wise to experiment first upon ourselves. A sudden rush of water into the ear, we should perhaps discover, for the first time, is painful, and we shall then be careful to use the syringe gently.

Ignorance, when knowledge can be so easily obtained, is culpable. Such ignorance is selfish and quite unpardonable.

If anything painful or troublesome has to be done, we should make our preparations silently and when possible out of sight, and then *do it*. We should never say, "Now, I am going to do so and so." We should not give the child time to think. Anticipation is often worse than realisation in such cases.

We must induce the child to exert his strength of will to be brave and patient, and we can best encourage him to do so by appealing to his reason, and by constantly reminding him of the end in view, *i.e.* his restoration to health and strength.

Children quickly become delirious. It is not wise to treat delirious patients as if they were quite unconscious. Often they are capable of receiving impressions, and a wrong or bad impression at such a time is sometimes followed by disastrous effects. Nothing should be said that children may not hear whether they be conscious or unconscious. Whispered confidences, half-allusions, half-sounds and half-lights (a general subdued light is best for a sick room) are to be deprecated. Everything in the sick room should be open and above board, for children are imaginative little people, and they often suffer agonies because they but half understand or wrongly interpret what is going on around them.

Amateur nurses are apt to be fussy and over anxious. Fussiness is fatal to good nursing; over anxiety may lead to selfishness. For instance, anxious mothers are tempted to allay their anxiety by a too frequent reference to the clinical thermometer. Taking the temperature is a worrying business, and should not be indulged in for selfish satisfaction. Again, mothers should avoid appealing incessantly to the child's affection. Children who are ill have little power to think of anything outside themselves. The cry "Mother worries me with kisses" is not without reason.

One point we wish to bring before the notice of all nurses of sick children. It is this. The fear of death assails most children at some period of their childhood, and as illness is usually the forerunner of death it is not unnatural that they should sometimes connect their own illness with their own death. Children are generally reserved about matters which frighten them; therefore we should find out, with tact and discretion,

if this fear be haunting them. If it be, the doctor is the best person to combat it. He speaks with an authority we have no power to assume, and his verdict will be accepted as satisfactory and conclusive.

We are well aware that there are many items connected with the subject of this article that we have been forced, from want of space, to omit mentioning. We will, therefore, conclude with saying that it is our opinion that mothers are the proper persons to nurse their sick children, provided that they are capable of doing so thoroughly and efficiently, and we venture to think that the majority of mothers will agree with us. If death claims for his own some dear young life, what mother does not derive a sad comfort from the thought that it was her loving hands that ministered to that little child's every want; that it was upon her arm alone that his weary head rested; that it was upon her face that his wistful eyes ever fell? However bitter that mother's cup may be, it will be free from the most bitter element of all—remorse.

Again, if after long anxious days and long weary nights, the little one is restored to health, nothing can equal the sweet satisfaction a mother feels in the thought that it was she who eased his pain, she who soothed his restless days, and she who nursed him back to life again.

HOME LIFE.

I HEARD the objects of the P.N.E.U. defined the other day as "to teach parents how to obey their children." This was, of course, satire, but there was a grain of truth in it and that is why I consider "A Mother's Letter" one of the most helpful articles which has lately appeared in the *Parents' Review*. It deals with home life from a point of view usually ignored by the new educationalists, and relegates the children I think to their proper place in the home. We members of the P.N.E.U. acknowledge "that the business of life is the formation of character," and we also will readily acknowledge, I imagine, that our own characters have been more truly formed by the sorrows and denials, the self sacrifice of our home life than by anything else. Are we right if we deny our children this mental tonic? I think not. The old method *did* turn out "free, noble men, sweet and well disciplined women." The heroes and heroines of the world have not been those as a rule who were their parents' first object in life. I thank "A Mother" for her frank avowal "that she used to hate teaching," and "that to be much with the children was a distinct effort of duty." I married at an age when every girl has a keen enjoyment in society amusement and also intellectual work, and at first all these seemed entirely swamped by ill-health, the care of babies, and domestic details which I hated.

This Society is anxious that we should give each other the benefit of our experiences. To do this one becomes unavoidably egotistical, but still, I will give some of mine. First then, I think every woman should carry on her own intellectual education and endeavour to keep herself in some way abreast of current thought. This can only be done by reading, certain steady hard reading, which is an effort and sometimes an impossibility to arrange for in the day. Good lectures are within the reach of everyone near a town, and give an impetus to study and thought. It is a good

plan, too, to rub up any subject in which we were good at school, for it delights and rather astonishes the children to find we can give them valuable help when they are ready to take up that subject. Secondly, society has great and pressing claims on us, which for husband's and children's sake we must not neglect. A wife's first duty is to her husband, and to fulfil it she must be ready to comprehend and sympathise with his pursuits, to entertain and amuse his friends. But all this means, in a sense, time taken from the children; it means that we must so arrange our time and theirs that they are suitably occupied while we are free. I think most women do too much needlework. You often hear them say "Oh, I have no time for reading, I make all the children's clothes." This, like the mending basket, which in books always accompanied the devoted mother, is surely a sign of bad management. I also make all my children's things, and with the help of a good needle-woman it takes me exactly one week in the spring, and the same time in the autumn. The nurse can do the mending one day a week, and if in a large family it accumulates, there are always poor women who, for a very moderate charge, do in a day what it would take many hours of a busy mother's time to accomplish. I believe, too, in the old days of nursery life, and like "a mother". I think of what my own mother used to do. In my own home we were a great deal left to ourselves. My mother, though she directed and overlooked everything, was too delicate to have us much with her. It seems to me now she must have been very "previous" in her educational theories. We were educated at home for more than nine years by one of the best and cleverest women it was ever my lot to meet (who by the way I do not fancy held any certificates), and by classes at a school near, but the great boon of our lives was the leisure. We had time to think, to play, to prepare our work our own way and above all to read. I don't know what we did not read! except that we had none of the literature written *down* to children with which the modern nursery is swamped.

Now, I think, children are being "drawn out" too much, they are not left to themselves enough to develop originality. Even their amusements are directed and must have a method in them. I have never even attempted to amuse my children

and it would be hard to beat them for pure imagination. They are always busy and happy and never ask what they can do next. What they do ask always is, "Is there nothing we can do to help you, mother?"

I have a great dislike to games containing diluted science; a sort of watered down Kindergarten. Do let us leave the children a little pure nonsense, it is so good for them! Our nursery was our castle to which we only admitted "grown-ups" on sufferance. There we played, acted, experimented, and occasionally fought, unmolested and unchecked except by the nurse, who, I believe, lived in our family over thirty years, and ruled us despotically. Absolute obedience to all rules was insisted on: we were never consulted as to our likes and dislikes as so many children are now, by parents who never consider how soon it ages children to have to legislate for themselves. The memory of that old nurse, who lived to nurse my boys, compels me to write on a point on which I feel strongly, namely, that in homes where the mother does direct her nursery and schoolroom the lady nurse is a mistake. Of course, when she is prevented from doing so it is right a lady should take her place, but in having no one but ladies near our children (rather a point with the P.N.E.U., is it not?) I think we miss a Christ-like touch in our children's lives—personal sympathy with the lower classes. Of course, a lady will superintend mending the toys and making scrap-books for hospitals, but after all, these are only a form of "charity" not the *touch* of sympathy which alone ever has or ever will do anything to lift up this world of ours. How much more do our children learn of the lives of the poor when it is their nurse's little delicate sister who inherits their cast-off clothes and appreciates the dolls they dress, or when the boys discover the cook's brother, who has no pocket money and must make everything himself, keeps poultry, rabbits or pigeons, much more successfully than they; or when they *know* the family to whom the Christmas dinner goes and can ask whether the pudding was good and the crackers funny which *they* denied themselves to give. "Blessed with a dear home life yourselves purify and gladden poor homes around. The great hope for Society is that the influence of pure and noble home life may descend and flow through all the squalid, wretched households. A Christian household ill comprehends

its vocation if it is not training the boys and girls which grow up in it to be wise as well as devoted ministers to the poor." Children cannot go among the poor, but through the maids who are part of their home they can gain some insight into less favoured lives than theirs. I think we should make our servants feel *one* with us—that we cannot do without them. Choose nice girls, insist on "obedience without argument" (an ideal motto for the nursery), allow them a few faults, sympathise with their monotonous lives and above all appeal to them for help in the care and training of the young lives which are partly in their care. Believe me, they will readily respond to confidence put in them, and in correcting the children's faults they will check their own. I grant one has disappointments. Perfect characters are rare and our own friends sometimes grieve us, but I know from experience that it often results in years of faithful, loving service.

After all we cannot idealise our children. They are not angels, but future men and women; souls who have eternity to perfect themselves. We all would like to keep them ignorant as well as innocent of evil, but we cannot. Our boys must go out into the world and fight the evil that is "around" *not in* them, and we know that it is to him that "overcometh" that the crown of life is promised. I think, too, that we do not enough insist on gratitude in our children. "Only noble natures can be grateful," and many modern children seem to take all kindness as their right and occasionally even patronise their parents. The father should be the centre of the home. He works for it, denies himself many pleasures that the children may have all, and the children should feel this. A walk or a romp with the father, an hour's talk with the mother, should be an honour as well as a pleasure. The children should realise that the parent thus devoting himself to them might well be amusing himself another way. It makes me *so* happy when people say, "I love to give your children pleasure, they are always so grateful," or when my sisters tell me, "If we give your children the smallest present they thank us so warmly we always feel nothing could possibly have pleased them more." A holiday here is high festival, and the children have a hundred ways of planning out their father's time, but graciously allow that I have the first right to his society,

and give me part of the day to have him "all to myself," a privilege we both enjoy! If it is "more blessed to give than to receive," it is surely a gift to be able to receive graciously.

In conclusion, let me quote again from that beautiful book, "The Home Life."* "One chief element of the parental art is judicious and timely confidence. The best preparation for the burden and struggle of life is the knowledge, in some wise measure, of what it costs the elders to live, in the highest sense—effort, patience, hope. But even about the lower things of life confidence is not wasted. Boys and girls are content to know their parents manage to live somehow. Their daily bread and pleasures come to them as the sunlight comes; they know nothing of the dust and sweat of the battle that wins them. It is well that as intelligence unfolds, the young people should know something of what the comfort and order of the home costs—something of what the father and mother talk over, with broken voices and clasped hands sometimes, when the children have left them and the cares of the day are done—that they may not think that life is quite a holiday pastime, and may see that the noblest thing man has to do in this world is to toil patiently and suffer bravely, that others may be housed, clothed, fed and trained for God. Why is it children so frequently find it easier to open their hearts to strangers than to those who are set in their homes to be to them in the place of God? Make them your comrades, as Christ made His disciples, opening to them your heart of hearts as their nature unfolds; while at the same time see that you share their sports and pastimes, and keep your interest keen in all their pleasures and pursuits; taking as much of your own boyhood and girlhood as you can on with you through life."

A. F. S.

* "The Home Life," by Baldwin, Brown, Smith, Elder & Co.

"TO YOU AND TO YOUR CHILDREN."

SOME THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG MOTHERS.

BY MRS. ASHLEY CARUS-WILSON (MARY L. G. PETRIE, B.A.)

"HISTORY is philosophy teaching by example," says an oft-quoted saying, attributed to Dionysius, of Halicarnassus. No history contains more inspiring examples of heroism than Holy Writ, and in all its gallery of heroes, three stand out pre-eminent as men whose dauntless courage was united with an absolute unselfishness and single-hearted devotion to the service of God, which meant that all their great work for men received no reward from men, and that their fame was, in Milton's noble words, "no plant that grows on mortal soil." Many had, indeed, cause to rejoice at the birth of all the three, and for the parents of all, as well as of him to whose parents that lot was directly predicted, there was the joy and gladness of bringing into the world one who left it better than he found it. They represent three very different ages, for *Jeremiah* was of the Old Covenant, *S. Paul* of the New Covenant, and *S. John the Baptist* fills a unique place between the two covenants of God with man.

But many parallels between their lives suggest themselves, ere we pass to consideration of that common feature in them which is of special significance to parents.

From the beautiful life of a God-fearing home, all were called to careers pathetic in their loneliness. "Thou shalt not take thee a wife," was God's command to one of the most affectionate of men (Jer. xvi. 2). Zacharias and Elisabeth, well stricken in years when their only child was born, can hardly have lived to see his manhood, and from early youth he became a hermit in the desert. S. Paul alludes directly to his solitary condition (1 Cor. vii. 7). In each we see deliberate renunciation of the family ties, which are always lawful and generally expedient, that they might give themselves wholly to the work of preaching repentance in an age of crisis and judgment, and for each of the three this personal solitude

must have intensified the keen suffering of seeing those whom they might have reckoned on as allies, their determined opponents. Jeremiah the priest was excluded from the Temple (Jer. xxxvi. 5); Jeremiah the prophet was unsparingly denounced and persecuted by the smooth-tongued utterers of popular predictions (Jer. i. 18, v. 31, xxix. 27, 28). Popular preacher as he was for a while, the Jews acknowledged that they had not believed the Baptist (Matt. xxi. 25); while the Acts of the Apostles records no less than twelve plots against S. Paul by compatriots whom nothing less than his blood would have satisfied.

All three knew the baffling and galling experience of having work which seemed to them, as indeed it was, a matter of life and death, arrested by sudden imprisonment. All three dared to stand, "with God to friend," alone against the whole world,—against its political leaders, its religious leaders, and its excited populace—and to preach to all unwelcome truths concerning righteousness and temperance and judgment to come; and homely duties also, such as prompt payment of wages to the employer, contentment with wages to the employed, and daily work for all who would eat daily bread. (Jer. xxii. 13; Luke iii. 14; 2 Thes. iii. 10.)

Nor are we to think of them as cold, self-centred characters, to whom human sympathy counts for little: their hearts were warmer than those of most men, and we know that tears such as those only who are at once strong and tender can shed, were shed by Jeremiah and S. Paul. (Jer. xi. 1; Lam. ii. 11, iii. 48; Acts xx. 19, 31, 37.) Painful but inevitable antagonism to the rest of the world was mitigated for each by the devotion of a group of faithful friends, who proved their power of winning love.

In the midst of incessant perils, all bore a charmed life till their work was done, and then received a crown of martyrdom: Jeremiah, according to a tradition that there is no reason to disbelieve, being stoned by the Jews, who had hurried him into Egypt against his will; John being done to death by the most worthless and unscrupulous of the worthless and unscrupulous Herods, to please a wanton woman; and S. Paul suffering by command of Nero, "who had done his best to render the very name of man infamous." Each seems to have died, as he had lived, alone.

But theirs were verily lives worth living. "Jeremiah is the one grand immovable figure which alone redeems the miserable downfall of his country from triviality and shame," and though his preaching could not save the nation as a whole, it prepared a chosen remnant to become the germ of a restored and purified nation later on. None greater, we are told, on the highest authority, was ever born of woman than the Baptist, and to S. Paul was given the most ample and splendid commission ever entrusted to human being (Acts xxvi. 16-18).

The fact that God could choose these men for the high honour of such high service involved some fitness for it beforehand on their part, some capacity such as other men had not for being the instruments of His purposes. Parents who cherish noble ambitions for their children, and who are willing to count the cost both to themselves and to their children of realising such ambitions, may well look then at the antecedents of these heroes, and note that for them, and, so far as we know, for no other human being, the dedication to their great life-work dated from a time prior to that dawn of conscious life which we call birth. "Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee," are the words of the Lord to Jeremiah; "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb," are the words of the Lord concerning John; "God, who separated me from my mother's womb," are S. Paul's words concerning himself.

And all were reared in godly homes. Jeremiah's father, Hilkiah, was probably the high priest who brought to light a long-forgotten book of the Law (2 Chron. xxxiv.); John's father, Zacharias was "righteous before God, and walked in all the divine commandments and ordinances blameless." Elisabeth, the only one of the three mothers of whom we have personal knowledge, is described in the same comprehensive eulogium as her husband (Luke i. 6). S. Paul's father and grandfather were both Pharisees (Acts xxiii. 6 *R.V.*), and sent him all the way from Tarsus to Jerusalem to enjoy all possible advantages in the way of religious education.

Such then were the heredity and environment of these men of God. Does use of such new words seem an incongruous blending of biblical and modern? Nay, the law that "Heredity" expresses, so far from being a discovery of the

nineteenth century, finds its most forcible expression in the familiar statement that "in Adam all die," and in the still more ancient declaration that "the iniquity of the fathers is visited on the children to the third and fourth generation." And what is "Environment" but that training up of a child in the way he should go, so that he departs not from it in old age, or that leaving of him untrained, which is his destruction and his parents' shame, concerning which the wise man utters so much wisdom (Proverbs xxii. 6; xxix. 15).

We cannot control our child's heredity, though we may and ought to make ourselves acquainted with it fully, in order to correct its weak points by education, and to use its strong points as incentives to the child to become worthy of his antecedents. But far more than we commonly realise, his environment is in our hands. Of a period which is the meeting ground of both influences, when the child's individual though not his independent life has begun, I would speak with bated breath, because surely the most sacred time in a woman's whole life is the season during which she is expecting with growing hope and with growing sense of responsibility, the great gift of her first-born; when in happy anticipation of the "joy that a man is born into the world," which is our Lord's chosen symbol for the joy unspeakable (John xvi. 21), of the joy that can be but feebly imagined by those who have not tasted it, she is asking the question asked by Manoah's wife of old, "What shall be the manner of the child, and what shall be his work?" (Judges xiii. 12, *R. V.*). Nor is it premature to ask that question at a time when even the most careless must have some solemn thoughts concerning the issues of life and death, and concerning Him to whom alone they belong. For already the welfare of a human soul is in that mother's care; by ignorance or heedlessness or selfishness, she may sin against her own unborn child, and bring it into being predisposed to be ailing or nervous, because of the feverish excitement, or the fretful worry, or the uncontrolled self-indulgence which has immediately preceded its birth. Or else, recognising that "To be well born is the right of every child," she may so live her life that her child starts fair. We are told that the mother of Charles Kingsley gave herself up deliberately to the enjoyment of every sight and sound in her romantic Devonshire home, hoping that the

sweet impressions of its rivers and woods and hills might be transmitted to her expected first-born. And surely no one ever loved nature better, or drew nobler inspirations from her than that mother's son.

Are mothers fully aware how soon their responsibilities begin; how largely what our children become, depends upon what we are? Whatever our theories, a practical belief in chance too often serves as a convenient excuse for what is actually inexcusable. In spite of the apostolic affirmation, that a man reaps as he has sown, in spite of the scientific demonstration that an effect must have some adequate cause, we talk as if the most important affairs were, after all, the sport of mere accident, quite beyond our control. "Luck was against me" we say, if frankly irreligious; "the dispensations of Providence are mysterious" we sigh, if we are prone to religious phrase. For instance, we cherish a sense of grievance and disappointment because we have not achieved what we wished to achieve, ignoring the fact that our deliberate choice in life has been very different from our vague wishes. Those who know precisely what they want to achieve, and bend their whole power towards its achievement, attain their end oftener than is commonly supposed. With a sore and bewildered heart, a mother admits that the child she wished to see robust and intelligent and well-principled, has turned out feeble and foolish and unworthy. What systematic and self-sacrificing and persevering efforts did she make for his health and education and moral training? The children of the very good often turn out remarkably ill, says a cynical world. It sounds improbable; it outrages common sense, and all clear conception of law, Divine or scientific. Is it true? Shall we idly echo it before we have proved whether it is more than a rare and abnormal occurence? We do not assert that no good parents ever had a bad child, or that no bad parents ever had a good one. King Hezekiah was the son of Ahaz and the father of Manasseh. But when we have allowed for the fact that under many different names and phrases, loud profession of religion has masked practical godlessness; that some well-meaning pietists have repelled instead of attracting their children; and that others, self-willed and unintelligent, have found scope for their zeal, and a claim on their efforts, everywhere rather than in their own

homes; the number of exceptions to the general rule, that God is in the generation of the righteous, proves to be small; while at the same time, such exceptions are turned to the utmost account by those who are only too glad to point the finger of derision at our faith and its professors. And if we knew all the circumstances, some of these exceptions would prove to be rather exemplifications of the law of heredity and environment. The sacred historian carefully names the mothers of many of the Hebrew kings. Mere names to us; to those who had chronicles and traditions now utterly lost, these names doubtless conveyed much concerning the characters of the monarchs. Other young mothers may find, as I have found, food for much interesting thought and study, in placing beside the general statements of scripture as to the posterity of the righteous and unrighteous, instances to be gathered from its narratives of good children of good parents; bad children of bad parents; good children of bad parents; and bad children of good parents. When the more obvious cases have been noted, we must look below the surface; inferring, for instance, the pious parentage of Moses, from Exodus iii. 6, xviii. 4, and Hebrews xi. 23; and of David, from Psalm lxxxvi. 16, a composition whose ascription to the sweet psalmist of Israel there is no good reason to question; and observing the enduring influence in the royal houses of Israel, of the two queens, Maacah and Jezebel.

Having thus used those most ancient and accessible of records, which are for all time and for all the world in their instruction, we can turn to the circle of our personal acquaintance, and our acquaintance, through reading, with notable names of later date. Again and again we shall find the law holding good, that the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep His covenant; and that He forgets the children of those who have forgotten Him (Psalm ciii. 17; Hosea iv. 6). For a single illustration, take the lion-hearted David Livingstone, reared as he himself phrased it, by "poor *and* pious parents," and sprung of ancestors of whom one could say, that he had searched the family traditions for many generations without finding one dishonest man among his fore-fathers, and of whom another dared to throw in his lot with the unpopular

cause and the exiled king, and to fall fighting not on the winning side at Culloden. I have spoken of this hero, whom a whole nation delighted to honour, because he, descended from hardy peasants, and bred in toil and poverty, had not the sort of heredity and environment that the world reckons advantageous. Contrast with this case, others, known I fear to us all, of children born in palaces, with the taint, physical, mental or moral, of an ancestor's sins upon them; or born to a heritage of wealth that, whether hoarded or squandered, has been a curse to them, or to a heritage of ease, that has caused them to die with "unexerted powers" as "recreants to the race," in Browning's forcible words. Or notice how some sturdy babe has grown into a sickly adult, because a careless mother left him to an ignorant nurse; or how some quick-witted child has grown into a dull adult, because of a neglected or misdirected education; or how some timid and affectionate child has grown into a cringing adult, given to crooked ways, because he has been cowed and repelled; or how some forward and attractive child has grown into a conceited adult, with too good an opinion of himself to realise a better self, because he has been flattered and indulged.

Here is the question that we parents have to face. What is our real aim for our children? By what means may that aim be attained so far as human effort can attain it? We may labour successfully to amass wealth, or to achieve social distinction for them, while we miss the opportunity of securing such lasting possessions and blessings that have no sorrow added to them, as a sound healthy body, a capable cultivated mind, and moral and spiritual strength. I do not say that we can guarantee these things for any child of ours; that we may not be disappointed in our immediate objects; that their lives may not shape themselves in ways we little foresee, and shall never wholly understand: but I do say that if our prayer and labour is earnestly directed to that end, we may confidently hope that they will become good and useful men and women.

For the parent whose trust is in God is justified in claiming for the child, long before it can enter on a religious life for itself, the divine blessing which is pledged over and over again to the seed of the righteous. And from the first promise of its life it may be dedicated to the service of God

as truly as were those three saints of old who did and dared so much in His service.

Did not Noah, the very first who is described as "a righteous man," prepare an ark "to the saving of his house"? Was not blessing predicted for Abraham's sake, not only on blameless, law-abiding Isaac, but also on wild nomad Ishmael? (Genesis xxi. 13, xxvi. 24).

"The promise is unto you and to your children," was the assurance to the congregation gathered into Christ's flock on the birthday of the Church, and to their descendants of whom we ourselves are (Acts ii. 39). Accordingly, S. Paul can say that the children of even one Christian parent are holy (1 Corinthians vii. 14), and can comfort himself with the thought that the "unfeigned faith" of his dearly beloved son Timothy, was of the third generation (2 Timothy i. 5). Quotations showing that the seed of the righteous are blessed might be multiplied indefinitely, to the great and endless comfort of the Christian parent. I observe eight or nine in the Book of Psalms only. Let us content ourselves here with one, which reads like a glorious revocation for the servants of God of that primeval two-fold doom incurred by parental guilt, of unrequited toil for the man, and of pain and peril for the woman in her motherhood; and which combines with the thought that the descendants of the godly are blessed, the thought that they are bound to hand on that blessing unimpaired as their children's best patrimony. The promise is one of the last in the Book of Isaiah. "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord and their offspring with them."

What will we then for our children? That they should be great in the eyes of men, and have the world's joy, which is but for a moment, and the world's sorrow which worketh death afterwards? Or that they should be great in the sight of the Lord, as the Baptist was, and have tribulation in the world, and in God's name overcome the world at last? We cannot certainly determine either destiny for them; we assuredly cannot bring them up for both at once; but in the fear of God, and with the help of God, we may do much now towards shaping their unknown hereafter.

MRS. ANSON ON

THE MOTHER'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE.

MRS. ANSON read a paper on "The Mother's Educational Course":—

The subject which I have been asked to bring before the Conference is that of the "Mother's Educational Course." By this we mean a course of reading, lasting three years, on subjects which are of vital importance to mothers. I am very glad to have the opportunity of speaking about it, for although it is regularly advertised in the pages of the *Parents' Review*, and is known as one of the agencies by which the Union works, I do not think its usefulness has yet been thoroughly realised by our members.

The course of reading extends, as I have said, over a period of not less than three years; papers being issued at the beginning of each year giving the names of the books which are to be read; and at the end of each half-year a paper of questions is sent to the students. Four subjects have been chosen for study. It is not necessary to take up all the four at once; some mothers have taken up two only. But these four have been chosen as being the all-important subjects to which mothers ought to turn their attention. For, while many topics are interesting, and it is good to learn about anything which lifts us to a higher level, these four are really indispensable to every mother who wishes to be thoroughly equipped for her work. They are thus described in the syllabus:—

Firstly. *Divinity*. "To help mothers to give their children such teaching as should confirm them in the Christian religion."

Secondly. *Physiology and Health*. "To give the knowledge

necessary for the care and development of children in sickness and health."

Thirdly. *Mental and Moral Science and Education.* "To show the principles of education, and methods based on these principles."

Fourthly. *Nature Lore and the Elements of Science.* "To enable mothers to awaken their children's interest in Nature, and to give them their first ideas."

Divinity includes (*a*) the study of portions of the Old and New Testaments; (*b*) books illustrating the Old Testament from the results of modern research; and (*c*) books containing practical teaching with regard to the religious life.

Physiology and Health includes books on the organs of the body, the laws of health, the care of the sick and of infant children.

The sub-divisions of the third subject are Mental Physiology, Ethics, the Theory of Education, and Methods of Instruction. Under *Nature Lore* (the fourth subject), elementary books are given on Botany, Geology, Astronomy, and the study of animal life.

It is by this course that Miss Mason carries further that system of training which she has planned to help the generation which is now growing up; for, as you will hear on Friday at this Conference, Teachers are being trained for work in home schoolrooms at the House of Education in Ambleside. Children (who are taught at home) are being brought directly under the guidance of the Ambleside centre through the Parents' Review School, with its syllabus of work and regular system of examinations. And finally Miss Mason has realized how the Union can best help Mothers.

If it is true, as has been said, that "a mother is only a woman, but that she needs the love of Jacob, the patience of Job, the wisdom of Moses, the foresight of Joseph, and the firmness of Daniel," we mothers are greatly in need of support; and I hope to show that, small as the means may seem, yet this course of reading really does give most efficient help to mothers who wish to reach forward to their high vocation.

One of the greatest difficulties of women living at home is that of securing consecutive hours of work; for our lives (especially lives lived in towns) are very full of interruptions

and conflicting duties. Now the Union offers us the compelling force of new interests awakened by this course of reading, and the spur of the half-yearly examinations as a help in securing that each week and each month shall have some definite task. If this definite task is achieved, the seed sown can hardly fail to bear some definite fruit, and our reward will be that we shall be better prepared to guide and to join in the life or interests of our boys and girls as they grow older.

It is true that our reading is for a time fettered if we join the course; the amount of work to be got through being so large that there is but little time for other reading. The gain however, if the knowledge is acquired, far outweighs any disadvantage of being thus for three years in leading strings.

Probably some who hear of this course of study will say that life itself gives a mother the experience she needs, and that a sensible woman can learn enough from the traditions of her own childhood, corrected by her present circumstances, to guide the lives of her children without undertaking a course of special study, and furthermore that she "cannot bring up her children by books."

But there is another point of view worth considering, namely, that a mother's reading in this course will make her much more observant, more able to appreciate and use the experience which life brings to her, and more quick to adapt herself to the varying circumstances of her children's lives.

I will give some instances of points in which I think the reading of this course will make a mother more able to do her duty by her children.

In the Bible reading, which I suppose most of us try to take daily with our children, we can no doubt explain the text (all but the most difficult passages) after a fashion, without preparation. But after reading Dr. Abbott's *Bible Lessons*, or *Clews to Holy Writ* (two books belonging to the Course), our lessons cannot fail to be more enthusiastic, and we must have more real interest in the characters and in the precepts which the Bible brings before us. Again, in watching the varying conditions of her children as they develop, whether in sickness or in health, how much more intelligently could a mother make her own observations, and how much more accurately could she describe the conditions (if necessary) to a doctor, if

she had read the books on the nature and construction of the body which form part of this course. Or in the many perplexing questions which arise as to dealing with children's tendencies and habits, in our wish to find out the interest which will awaken the dormant faculties of the so-called stupid child, or when our guidance is needed as to some instruction given in the home schoolroom, what a help it will be to have the books of the third subject to turn to.

But the Conference will better understand what a real help the Mother's Educational Course has been, if I read the testimonies which have been written to me by those who have undertaken it, or are now engaged in it.

One student writes:—"It is a most useful form of self-education and improvement. I do not regret the time spent in reading; on the contrary, the studies are most helpful and interesting."

Another, who has only read the first year's work, says: "The whole year's reading has made me so much interested in all the subjects, that I feel sure I shall go on following up many of them long after the Course is over."

A mother, who after the first year took up only Physiology and Nature Lore, writes as follows:—"Both the subjects I took I found very useful. I was then teaching my eldest children, and the little I was able to tell them of the flowers and insects we met with interested them very much. Some of the books I keep as books of reference, and make frequent use of them. The books on Botany and Astronomy have given both to me and my children much pleasure."

Another mother, who has completed the Course, says: "I have found the Course a help in introducing me to a whole world of educational thought and practice of which I knew little or nothing; and thus it has given me self-confidence in directing the education of my children, in choosing teachers, schools, and so on for them, which I could not have felt before. I have found a great interest in the study of education for its own sake, and I find that it gives me interests in common with other people with whom I should perhaps otherwise have no sympathies. In the second place, the course has given me a motive and a framework for systematic study, which it is always so hard to get into one's day. The sections I have found most interesting and useful are Divinity and

Natural Science. I think in the section of Nature Lore the great advantage of the Course has been the impetus to out-door observation for one's self, more than the study of any particular book."

To this I would myself add that the sections Divinity and Nature Lore seem to me to have this especial value, that they may be studied for the additional interest in life that they bring to ourselves, and not only from the "educational stand-point," from which some of us are inclined to view everything.

But I must now attack the point to which I wish to draw special attention, namely, that it is impossible to reap the full benefit of the course of training, unless it is accepted as a whole, that is, with its half-yearly examinations. Those only who have taken each examination in its turn know what definiteness is thus given to the study of the half-year, or how great is the help of knowing in which direction the weak point lies, and where progress has been made.

For the examinations are a reality. The questions without being unduly severe test thoroughly not merely the knowledge of the actual text-book, but the reader's grasp of the subject and true interest in it. And this true living interest is what we want to share with our children, with the aim of giving them an inspiration rather than with the expectation of being able to supply all the teaching they will need. Few mothers could qualify themselves to teach physiology, astronomy, botany, geology, and the knowledge of birds and insects; but all can learn enough of the alphabet of these subjects to answer intelligently the questions of young children, and to sympathize with the lessons of the older ones, or to work with them.

To reach, however, even this elementary amount of knowledge there must be definiteness of study, and here comes in this all-important point of examinations.

We are told that the mind knows only that which it can put in the form of an answer to a question. If then we cannot answer questions on the subjects we have been reading, it is open to doubt how much we really know about them. It is for this reason that Miss Mason wishes that all who attack the course of reading would also submit to the examination test.

The papers are written at home; unlimited time is allowed; and indeed the only restriction is that no reference should be made to the text-books after the questions have been seen. It is not necessary to take the examination at the end of each half-year, nor to complete the course of reading in three years. The time may be prolonged; so if a student has for any reason been unable to prepare for the examination in six months, she may continue her reading for twelve months or more; and as the only object of the Course is to help mothers to grasp thoroughly the meaning of the books they are advised to read, it is far better to prolong the time spent on the books than to hurry through them.

My great hope in reading this paper is that I may attract more mothers to join this Course. I know what an immense help it has been to myself, chiefly perhaps by making me grapple with subjects which it seemed beforehand impossible to get hold of; and I would gladly persuade other members of our Union to give themselves the same help. It is in a sense a sacrifice, if that can be called a sacrifice, which is deeply interesting; but if it be a sacrifice, it brings an abundant and speedy reward.

For to be honestly pursuing a course of study, however simple, makes a mother feel that she is trying in some measure to live worthily of her calling. She will feel that she is doing her best to prepare herself for the bringing up and training of useful men and women, thoroughly developed in body, mind, and spirit, who may by God's blessing leave the world a little better than they found it.

The papers read at the Conference overflow this "Conference" number of the *Parents' Review*. The work done on Thursday, May 27th, and Friday, May 28th, including Rev. Canon Scott Holland's sermon, will appear in the August number.

THE

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MOTHERS AND BOYS.*

BY THE LORD BISHOP OF STEPNEY.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I understand that this is a gathering composed almost entirely of mothers, and I feel I am extremely bold to talk to you on the subject of how to bring up your boys. My only justification for doing so, is that I have been mixed up all my life with boys and young men, and have seen the whole question about boys, and how to bring them up, from three points of view—first from my own boyhood at home, my school days, and the time I spent at the University of Oxford; secondly, for nine years I have been living in the middle of Bethnal Green, with successive generations of old public school boys and university men whom I had to train in some sort of useful work; thirdly,—and this sends me here to-day with a great sense of responsibility, and if I say some very plain things you must not mind—the awful experience during the past three years of the knowledge of London life, and especially life in the West end of London. I am dealing at this moment with boys like your own boys and brothers who, if only they had been warned earlier in life, would have been saved from the terrible experience they are going through now.

* Lecture delivered at 4, Grosvenor Crescent, London, S.W., Dec. 3rd, 1900.

I have divided what I want to say to you to-day into three heads:—

(1) Dangers which a mother may prevent.

(2) Helps that a mother can give.

(3) Possible mistakes in a mother's treatment of her boys.

(1) *With regard to dangers which a mother can prevent.* It is always, I think, best to go straight for the most difficult thing of all, and I will begin with moral danger. What is borne in strongly upon me in dealing with young men in London, is that all this fearful shame, penitence, remorse, and the struggle of coming back into the right path, could have been saved in nine cases out of ten by a warning from their mothers before leaving home at all. I have traced many cases back to the beginning, and I find that the sins invariably begin at school; therefore the question immediately comes—What is it that we have to be so careful and anxious about when our boys first go to school? I believe if they could only have wise treatment at that time—the boys and the teachers working together hand-in-hand—an infinitude of misery would be saved.

The moral danger to boys at school is threefold. In the first place, at the age of 13 or 14 there is making itself felt in the boy's little frame what is a perfectly innocent thing—the sexual instinct. The boy knows nothing about it, he is puzzled, alarmed, troubled, and time after time he is led to do himself what often turns out afterwards to be a lasting injury. Then, secondly, there are often older boys ready to talk about these things, to take the boy who comes straight from home into a corner, and to tell him with a great air of importance the elementary facts of life. I can remember perfectly a boy, older than myself, talking in some such way to me when we went up to cricket or football, and I was talking the other day to a man who says he remembers exactly the same thing in his time; and though, in individual cases, it may do no harm, it may harm a boy greatly if he is spoken to by a low-minded school-mate. And what has he to tell? What he tells and reveals to the little boy is something that his grandmother knew years and years ago. Every public or private schoolmaster will tell you that it is not the telling of these facts that do harm, but the person by whom they are told. Thirdly, the greatest danger of all is one

which mothers and fathers can obviate. They never seem to warn their sons at all, and frequently elder boys in a school will meddle with the little ones in a way that does them lasting harm, and the little boys, in all innocence, without in the least knowing what they are doing, get into bad ways that produce illnesses and diseases which sometimes ruin their lives for all time. Now it seems to me that mothers ought to know these facts. Fathers are singularly shy about speaking of these things at all, and if the father won't do it, the mother must. In what better atmosphere can a boy be warned, and told about the most simple facts of life, than in the atmosphere of home, by the father or mother? When a little lad is crying in his mother's room, perhaps the last day before he goes to school because he *is* going away to school, what a chance there is for you to talk to that lad, to tell him of the dangers that may come! Tell him he will have these sensations and feelings, and that he need not be frightened—and tell him how to deal with them. Tell him he will meet low-minded boys; but let him have the knowledge from your lips. Explain to him quite simply the facts of human nature; there is nothing demoralising in these facts, unless they are put in a demoralising way. Tell him at once that he may meet bad boys at school, and that if they meddle with him he must at once report it. At any rate, teach him how to take care of himself. I had a striking instance the other day of how a father's warning saved a little lad at school. He knew how to take care of himself, and wrote at once to his father. The father immediately went down to the school, and the bigger boy was almost expelled; but, like many others, it was found he had drifted into these ways without knowing how wrong they were, and on being severely reprimanded was given another chance; he made the only amends he could, by constituting himself the guardian of the little boy, seeing that he was not bullied and so on. Those two boys were saved, entirely because the father had the sense to warn his boy before he went to a public school. Remember, however good the school or the schoolmasters are, they cannot be absolutely certain what is going on at all hours of the day and night. I know that masters have a sleepless watchfulness over this, and my great point is—have your boy forewarned, do not leave him dependent on the watchfulness of the master.

Having got the most difficult thing off my mind, I will go on to the second point—*The danger of loneliness.* Every week, during the thirty-two years since I first went to school I have had a letter from my mother—yes, and answered it too. Now, if his mother is such a friend to a boy as that, is that not something to rescue him from feeling lonely? Is not that weekly letter, in which he keeps no secrets from his mother, a wonderful preservation from harm? The boy has always the sense of his mother's love, the sense that he must not let her be ashamed of him, and on your side, never letting your boy miss the weekly letter, gives him a sense of a perfectly faithful friendship. One sees beautiful friendships between husbands and wives, but the friendship between a mother and her boy at school is one of the most delightful things, and if the mother is really her boy's friend I am perfectly sure he will not go very far wrong.

Then we come to the third danger—*Gambling.* Of course, a great many young men have been ruined by gambling and card playing, and I believe one of the ways to prevent a boy having a thirst for cards is *not* to make a rule that he shall never play cards, for if that rule is made, he takes a morbid delight in them when he goes to the University, and is free from home rules. Playing cards early has exactly the same effect as being allowed too many sweets. A boy who has had too many sweets always loathes them before he gets very far on in life. Another thing regarding gambling—mothers cannot be too strict with boys about their pocket-money. If they borrow even a penny or sixpence, they should be made to repay it at the point of the bayonet, and it should be instilled into a boy, as a point of honour, that a gentleman must return anything he borrows. Sometimes in dealing with a young man whom I am trying to bring back to the right way, he says to me—"I'm awful about money, I always have been!" That has happened when a boy has been allowed to suppose that it really did not very much matter; he belonged to rich people, and the amount was nothing. But my point is, that to lay a great stress on and make a great point of honour about money during boyhood, is one of the strongest preservatives against gambling and throwing money about in after life.

The fourth danger is *softness.* That varies in many homes and, of course, that particular danger is far greater in the

West end of London than in the East end. But do not fall into the danger of softness for your boys. However comfortable a home is, get your boy up every morning punctually; half the evils I have mentioned arise from self-indulgence in the morning. Let the boy lie hard; of course he must have a sufficiently comfortable bed to let him sleep, but train him, in some little way, to the hardness which our boys have to bear, whether they like it or not, in East London. Personally I am a great believer in out-door games; I believe that half these wretched sins and tendencies come among the idle and those who do not play out-door games; I entirely agree with compulsory games, unless a boy is really delicate, then of course he must be let off—and is. Have the danger of softness before you.

The fifth danger is *selfishness*. The way some boys are allowed to loll about the drawing-rooms, and are not made to get up and be polite to their mothers and sisters is appalling. We are all naturally very selfish, but make your boys run about for other people, and look after their mothers and sisters. The kindness of some people does more harm to character than the unkindness of others, and the kindness of mothers sometimes does more harm to boys than apparent unkindness. Do not let your boy be selfish.

My second heading was—*The helps that a mother can give her boy.*

First—teach them religion in a rational way. Not only, I am sorry to say, have I a great deal to do with those who have gone wrong morally and are trying to get back into the right path, but I have a great deal to do with those in a state of scepticism. A boy may be saved from scepticism and may get great help from his mother—help that will prevent his losing his faith when he first goes out into the world—if he is taught religion in a rational way. It is a great trial for a boy's faith when he first goes to the University, and suddenly has to read philosophy and to argue points he has never thought out deeply before. If he has not been warned, or taught anything about the Old Testament from a rational point of view, he is at the mercy of anybody who tries to dissipate his faith. A short time ago a young man said to me—"One of my chums at the University is a Jew, and I don't know how to answer his arguments!" In teaching

your children religion, I do think you might suggest—what such a book as *The Speaker's Commentary* would tell you—that, for instance, Balaam was probably an augur—a regular trade in those days—and sought a sign from the ass's bray, just as any of the augurs of old times saw a sign in the flight of birds, or the sound of the geese in the Capitol at Rome. A boy is told that the sun stood still, and when he reads a little science, he sees the difficulty of believing it. If you consult any commentator about the Old Testament—Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, for instance, which, though hardly up to date, gives all necessary information—you find that Joshua, pursuing his enemies, suddenly became very much alarmed lest the great storm sweeping up the valley should bring the day to a premature close. He said, "Sun, be thou silent upon Gibeon," which is the literal translation; his prayer really meant, "Don't let this storm sweeping up the valley come to end the daylight, before I have overtaken these enemies of God and man." When the storm passed away, and the sun shone out, his prayer was answered. Tell your boy, too, that he need not believe that nearly 50,000 people were destroyed in Bethshemesh, which could not contain more than a few hundred people to begin with. The reason some of the numbers in the Old Testament are so remarkable is that in old MSS.—where each little point meant 1,000—the little points were easily rubbed off, and in time the numbers have got hopelessly wrong. But don't let your boy go to school under the impression that all his faith is gone, and that he must throw over his religion when he discovers such things as these. Mothers, by taking a little trouble when teaching their boys religion originally, might certainly save them from this.

Secondly, a mother can further help her boy by supplying the ideal of what a woman should be. You do not realise, I am sure, what boys feel with regard to their mothers. If once you let a boy lose faith in his mother, you have broken the thing that will best keep him straight all through his life. He never criticises his mother, but takes all she is to him for granted, and thinks her a perfect model of all the virtues. This feeling ought to make every mother take care that she never does anything that could possibly be spoken evil of. If this happens, the boy's best safeguard has been taken away. Supply to your boys yourself an ideal of what a woman should be.

Thirdly, you can help a boy as to what he shall be in life. A mother really has more responsibility than anybody else as to the vocation and future of her boy. When a boy is quite small he suggests that he shall be a policeman, or a railway guard, or a keeper; but when he has got through these things it falls to the parents to help him with the real choice. You must make him think. I should like to say something about the question of taking orders. It is a most scandalous thing that now there are hundreds of curacies vacant in England because there is nobody to take them. The number of University men taking orders is daily becoming smaller, and the number has to be made up with clerks from the city—young men who have not been to the University, who have saved up a little money to help them through their examinations, or to go perhaps to King's College. They are excellent fellows in their way, but I say it is a bad thing for the Church of England if the regular supply is going to fall short—if our clergy, for the future, are to be drawn solely from young clerks in the city, with just a smattering of the needful knowledge. It largely depends on you. We all know how, if a boy says he is going to take orders, sometimes a smile goes through the house:—"Jack's going to be a parson, do you hear that?" This should not be the case. The boy is laughed at, and perhaps gets put off what has been his original bent. I call it crushing the vocation of God, and those who do it will have to answer before God for it. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit in that boy's heart is the inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, and if you foster it, and take care of it, you may have the inestimable happiness of being the mother of some excellent Priest of God, who may do you credit in years to come. At any rate, I think you Christian mothers should wish to dedicate at least one of your boys to God and His Church, and though it is perfectly true that he will probably be a poor man all his life, he won't be any the less happy for that. It will be a fatal thing for the country and the Church unless we get a supply of young men from the Universities. In preaching the other evening to a congregation of undergraduates about it, I reminded them that the objective call is often not heard. Men say, "We have not a call!" But heaven and earth is ringing with it! People forget the objective call and need. Volunteers flocked to South Africa.

Why? Because it was the need called them. I want people to recognize the call of the Church to-day in the great need for men.

Fourthly, do not so press religion as to put a boy off. Religion should lie very lightly on the soil. Do not make Sunday a dreary day to him; let him enjoy Sunday. Let the whole thing lie lightly upon him that he may not feel religion and Sunday dull and monotonous.

Fifthly, be a confidant in your boy's troubles. There is no one he ought to go to before his mother—until he gets his wife—and then he should feel that his mother sets the ideal of what his wife ought to be.

My third head is, *Possible mistakes in dealing with boys.*

First, fussing over them too much. If once you fuss over your boy, he begins to think himself of too much importance; to think what a wonderful person he is; what wonderful things he will do. It is a mistake to repeat his wonderful sayings at the age of seven over the tea table when he is present. The boy who is fussed over often ends by becoming a little prig.

Secondly, never suspect him. The great thing is to be always perfectly certain he is telling the truth; if once you say to a boy, "Now are you sure this is true—are you sure you are telling me the truth?"—that is the first step towards making him a liar. It is a fatal mistake not to trust your boys.

Thirdly, the mistake of expecting too much religious feeling in boys when young. I know a boy who was always so full of what he was going to do when he grew up; how he was going to the mission field and so on. The moment he left school, instead of doing mission work, or anything like it, he went on rather a low stage. I rather expected it. I distrust too much talk about their religious feelings among school boys.

Fourthly, don't spoil your boys' tempers. An old Rugby master tells a story of a boy writing home to his father complaining of the master. The father sent the letter back to head-quarters forgetting to tear off the fly-sheet, on which the boy had written a postscript—"He's a beast, but he's a just beast." The master considered that one of the greatest compliments he had ever received. Boys appreciate justice more than anything else. Never be unjust when boys do

what is wrong. The most popular masters in public schools are the strict masters who are just.

Fifthly, don't make the mistake of comparing one boy to another—"Look at so-and-so, how nicely he does it." I have a recollection of that myself, I used to be held up as a model to another boy. There is only one answer to that, and it was given in *Punch*. A neighbour's son was held up as a model to a boy: the delinquent turned to his father and retorted, "Yes, but then he has such clever parents!" That was a fair score.

I want to say a few more words about boys when they become undergraduates, and when they go out into the world.

First about undergraduates. Take an interest in them. Let your boy at Oxford or Cambridge feel you are interested in what he is doing, in what he is learning. Read up a bit, and let him feel you are a companion to him; it is such a mistake to let him get into the way of thinking "Mother won't understand this." I think it would be a very good thing for mothers to do a little reading quietly, so that when their boy comes back from the University he may find them interested in some new book that has given him pleasure. The mothers who have most influence with boys do that.

Then, do have an adequate sense of proportion. The other day a lad got into a scrape and his people came to me about it in a terrible state of mind. I implored them not to take any notice of it, and, as a matter of fact, the whole thing passed over. Keep a sense of proportion, don't put down as moral failings what are really only animal spirits, and above all do keep a sense of humour.

What can you do for your boys when they go out into the world? Let your lad feel that you expect him to be a gentleman to every woman he meets; therefore, to be consistent, I do strongly think that you must not have in your drawing-room men whom you know to be living bad lives. A little healthy courage of this kind safeguards not only your boys, but your girls too. I cannot think how pure mothers can allow with their girls, men whom they ought to be ashamed to have in the same house. Never let your boy cease to feel in after life that his mother has looked after him and taken care of him.

Lastly, when your boy is married, do not be jealous of his wife—if you can help it.

I have put together what I have said to you very roughly, but I have taken it from what I have myself seen—from life as I see it every day. If you pray about your boys, and follow that up with love—love—love—wise love—all your days, then you will have the inestimable happiness in another world, of not only being there yourself, but of meeting your children there too.

The Chairman (— BIDDLE, ESQ.) : Before I ask you to give a very hearty vote of thanks to the Bishop of Stepney for his eloquent address, I should like to say a few words and, if possible, make two or three suggestions. The tendency nowadays is to imagine that every new idea in education must necessarily be good because it is new. I would like people, before they try new experiments, to be quite sure that they have got all the good they can out of the old methods. No doubt the old systems can be improved upon—they are being improved upon every day—but I would like people to think that some regard must be had for the tried system. With regard to home influences, the Bishop has told us a great deal; but there are one or two definite and practical points which come under our notice every day. Most of the failings I have noticed in small boys come straight from the nurseries. As far as I can trace back, it is because when the boys were little things, the mothers had found it so dreadfully hard to say *no* gently and firmly. I am told boys we find no trouble with are troublesome at home. That is because they have not been taught to understand at home that "No" means "No." Had they been made to understand this, many troubles would never come.

We are now approaching Christmas and I should like to say one word on the subject of holidays. I think it is wrong for a child to come back to school, and feel that he has not had proper Christmas holidays in London unless he has been incessantly to parties and theatres. I feel sure that many of those evils that appear a little later than the time I deal with in the boys, arise from going with their elders to theatres they would be much better away from. Nothing will induce me to believe that a regular system of gaieties—do not think for a moment that I wish to prohibit parties altogether—is not bad for boys in mind, body and character. The excitement is too great for them, and when they come back to work at the end of a holiday spent in that way, it takes them at least

three weeks to settle down, and their minds are dull. I would like mothers to think about this, to say *no* sometimes, and to mean it, when they think their children have had enough gaiety. Another point I should like to notice is a growing lack of courtesy amongst boys. My father always impressed upon his sons that courtesy could never be shown better than in addressing servants. Small boys sometimes come to my house and speak to my servants in an outrageous fashion; I am quite sure some attention ought to be paid to it. Lastly, I would like to urge and back up what has been said about out-door games to the utmost of my power. I would urge all mothers never to say to a schoolmaster, as is so often said to me—"I hate football, it is a horrible game!" The Bishop of Stepney has referred to one phase of games—to make the boys healthy and strong, and to work off their animal spirits. That is excellent; but there is another point. Playing at games, when you share the work and struggle for the mastery, when the joy of triumph and the self-restraining influence of defeat is shared with other members of your side, is as healthy a training for character, mind and body, as a boy can have. It is not merely the playing the game by yourself, it is the playing a game with others, where you are only part of a side, and have to do the best for your party as well as for yourself, and where you share the joy of triumph and the sorrow of defeat.

Questions were asked by several members of the audience: among others, regarding the keeping of Sunday and Sunday games; the giving of pocket money; whether a boy's little debts should be paid if he over-spent his allowance; whether wine should be prohibited altogether, or treated as cards as not absolutely forbidden; whether a form of prayer should be supplied for a boy's guidance?

THE BISHOP OF STEPNEY in reply said: As to the keeping of Sunday. That is one of the most difficult questions that can be asked. I should feel inclined to say that a little boy ought to be taught to go to church with his mother. When boys get a little older, and if they seem to hate going, I should not force them into it, but try to make them feel it a privilege. As I have said before, I think it a great mistake to thrust religion down a boy's throat, and I always feel it rather a triumph for the policy of not doing

so, that in one family I know well, where there were seven boys, three of them are clergymen and the other four are more religious than the three who are ordained. With regard to Sunday games: it depends on what they are. Charles Kingsley would never allow his boys to play cricket on the village green on Sunday, because he said they could play during the week. I should be much more liberal-minded to boys in the East End than to West End boys. I often tell them there is no harm in their going out for walks or bicycle rides on Sunday afternoons, if they have attended to their religious duties in the morning—for that is the only time they can get fresh air; objecting to that seems to me to be making into a sin what is in reality no sin. This is the principle: you must work out your own details on the Sunday question.

About pocket money: by all means let your boys have some; and let it be in proportion to what he will have to spend in after life. *But*—make him keep an account book. As to whether a boy's debts should be paid when he spends more pocket money than he has got—of course circumstances differ; but if a boy's debts are paid, see that he pays you back the money out of his weekly allowance. A father said to me the other day—"When my boys get into debt, I make it as uncomfortable for them as possible!" That is an excellent rule.

I do not at all take the view that wine should be treated in the same way as playing cards and not prohibited. The more wine is kept away from young boys the better. It does them nothing but harm, unless they are really very delicate. Naturally I see the difficulty that when they get to the University they may take too much; but I do not think you will save them from that by letting them have it as boys. In this connection may I say that letting boys play cards for money is a fatal mistake. It is playing with fire.

I think a form of prayer *should* be given to boys at first, because they do not know what to say. *The Daily Round*, price about 3*s*. or 4*s*., is an excellent book of devotion, and let your boy have a prayer card.

THE CHAIRMAN proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Bishop of Stepney for his lecture, and the proceedings terminated.

THE SCOPE OF MOTHERHOOD.

By Lady Hamilton.

This subject is full of special interest to the actual mother, likewise the potential mother, and it is because of its application to a very wide area of women that I have chosen it for to-day's talk.

You must be patient with my methods, please, of handling my subject. For I tell you that I am apt to digress from the steady common-place attitude of mind and perhaps imagine far too much, and express far too much on the sentimental side of things. But Life, and Life's ways, get so dull when dealt with only as they are, and not as they *might* be, and as they *should* be! The Soul is always asking for some prospect, some hope, something to work up to, isn't it?

This question of Motherhood, then, has two outlooks, the real and the ideal, the actual and the potential.

The very word Motherhood has a lovely sound. Insensibly we picture at once a condition of love, production, protection, an enfolding safety and shelter of some sort—possibly a divine condition of repose and peace or it may be a dignified condition of earnest activity. There is a full tone about the word, and a consoling sweet sound which appears to rest the mind even to contemplate. But the main thought of Motherhood is a loving sympathy, and a soft shelter from all that irks and frets us in the contact with the world,—and above all it speaks of goodness. That sort of goodness that works with untiring love for the household, that prays with untiring lips the prayer for its safety, that leads with patient, tender hand, the straying, wilful feet of its children.

Motherhood is a tolerably expansive idea, and is suggestive of an almost limitless horizon of possibilities. I go so far as to think that every woman-child should be educated for Motherhood from the cradle, and that the sanctity of her potential Motherhood should be considered long, long before she marries or thinks of marriage, or even when marriage

will never be her real vocation. It has been said, by whom I wish I knew, that "she who rocks the cradle rules the world," and if we think deep into that idea we find it practically is so. She is the vehicle of production, she it is who peoples the lands; she is the educator and teacher of the infant mind, she it is who guides the early years of the future men and women. She is herself a power perhaps to-day, and to-morrow, though beneath the green sod, her influence remains on the generation she leaves behind, and so "her works," as it were, "do follow her."

The condition of Motherhood is the most dignified and the most beautiful of all positions in life, and every picture painted of the Madonna has tried to express in the figures of the Mother and Child, some thought of victory, gladness, humility, and hope. The Madonna and Child are after all only a type of the beauty and grace, and of the infinite comfort, that the sight of a mother and little child always have for the human-loving public.

"Mother" is mainly the "Good Fairy" of our home life, and in the homes of England so much of her success as a nation has been born. I look upon the homes of England as the foundation of her Empire, and it seems to me that in them are nourished and cherished the workers for, and rulers of, this great country. The grit and the purpose of men are home bred, and the graces of life are home bred, and Motherhood must indirectly bear the blame or praise of the nation's honour or degradation, its rise or its fall in dignity. In Motherhood I feel I must include all women, for it is they who, married or unmarried, as wife, widow or maid, are mostly responsible for the making of the men, and the men along with the women mean the Nation.

Do you remember the lines in *Aurora Leigh* after she has written her great poem and has refused her cousin's love, she reflects?

"I might have been a common woman now,
Less alone, and less left alone,
With chubby children hanging round my neck
To keep me low and wise.
Ah me, the vine that bears such fruit is proud to stoop with it.
The palm stands upright in a realm of sand."

But no palm need stand upright in a realm of sand really. The Motherhood in all of us can be gratified to some extent,

though the babes we cherish may not be the children of our lovers. They are, perhaps, the motherless and fatherless bairns of this world, the sad, the sick, and the sordid, whose motherless condition moves the heart of the great Mothering bands of dear, benevolently souled women to shelter and care for them, and to so extend their power of mothering and Motherhood that the wilderness does through their influence blossom as the rose. And here comes in a great item of encouragement for us all. No love is ever lost, no good deed that does not somewhere find its mark, no tender word spoken that does not reach some sorrow-laden soul and cheer it. "Cast thy bread upon the waters," and possibly we may know whom it has fed after many days, though perhaps never! that is little to the point, Motherhood means giving, it means tending, it means expending all, only out of pure, sweet love. And to know that it may be softening and sweetening life's sorrowful hard ways to some weary feet, and to some sour cups it may be sweetening the draughts, is good enough for the simple Motherhood's desire to give, and not receive comfort.

So far you will say we have only dealt with the ideal, scarcely touching on the practical and real actual every-day work. Well, we will turn to it. Motherhood implies that the mother has some knowledge of herself, her disposition, her character, her virtues and her faults; that she also is well aquainted with her constitution and her condition of bodily health.

Maternity of the physical, actual kind may be her lot, or she may only stand in some sort of motherly relation to some of her kindred, or even to aliens. "Know thyself," said the Delphic Oracle, and self-knowledge of our physical, mental and moral construction, healthily and normally grasped, will save the actual mother who bears children from many an after regret that she might have brought them into the world better equipped for its struggle, had she known. And later as the children grow up, she might have lost her temper less often, and managed them better, had she thought of where they were repeating her faults, and where her virtues, and where their father's kind was being reproduced.

Very diligent painstaking is required of Motherhood in these matters where it concerns her own reproduction, and

where it is the upbringing and mothering of other folks' bairns; the strain they come from, and the general surroundings and circumstances of their lives, have equally to be considered. In educating our children (and we can't throw all the responsibility on the school and the teachers) the greatest lesson of all is goodness, the next is reverence, and the next observation, and comparison. The critical faculty is by no means to be crushed out of a child, but we have to guide it and help it aright. Let the children discuss their opinions with you, and come to own their decisions. Of course it is very difficult to put into them that ever graceful charm of charity while they are yet young, but time will bring it. Unfortunately more evil is wrought by the sitters who endeavour to balance themselves on both sides of the hedge, than by the decided though possibly mistaken position of definite criticism. Children are usually copyists, and they are often absorbing to themselves the attitudes of their elders, and occasionally deciding firmly that when as old as you "they won't be like you" nor "do what you do." Sometimes mother's conduct is the divine torch that we look to light us home, alas! sometimes it is the blazing beacon that reveals the pit-falls and vanities which we desire to avoid.

It is essential to the child's progress in education that parents should work with, and not against the teachers. Boys are apt to consider the schoolmaster as a lawful enemy brought into life at the jolliest time of it just to annoy them; the master himself generally deals with these gentlemen accordingly and usually wins respect or at any rate gets work out of them somehow. Now with a girl it is quite otherwise. She inclines to like her school, and she will follow her mistress and often give her much love and service. Then I have known jealousy on the mother's part spring up and create a disturbance like an evil whirlwind, and all pleasure is destroyed for both mistress and pupil. Jealousy and fighting will never win back a lost position. I admit it is sad to lose ground with our children's love, but remember it has to come, and it is a far wiser and a far sweeter course to smile with your children in all their joys than to jar and fret them because the natural law of things is taking them away from you, because in family life, as in other life in the

great world, "the old order changeth and giveth place to new." The very condition and position of Motherhood means sacrifice. It means an eternal state of service, and it is in this that mothers are often so beautiful and so beloved. There be those mothers of course who keep their children's devotion in the most extraordinary way, the extent of rope given seems only to make the children say how much better mother is than anyone else. But we cannot guarantee such a condition and I think that some of the wisest and some of the best do not get all they ought from their children, because they have not what the Irishman calls "the way wid them." Keeping pace with the children is sometimes pretty difficult, and to keep ahead of them very hard work, but the wisest course is to admit that they may get ahead of you in knowledge but you are ahead of them in experience, judgment, and self-control.

In taking up this line of thought, I don't advocate the spoiling of the children in the least. Motherhood is bound to take up the attitude of courage and honesty. It is as necessary to be straight with your children as it is to be straight in every relation of life. Here may I say one word about that line which some mothers in my day used to take, namely, of hiding things with regard to the children's faults from the father, lest he should be too severe. A father has every right to his views, and his rules ought not to be broken, and certainly mother should not wink at the evasions. It is a sad and improper condition of a household when it is divided as to action. Divided as to opinion is right enough if it agrees to differ, but what I think absolutely undignified and unworthy of Motherhood is to even in the smallest degree lessen the respect in which the children should hold their father, as the head of the household, who is the usual breadwinner.

Alas! sometimes he isn't a worthy head and he only is a waster. Then the nobility of Motherhood endeavours to cover it and repair it as best she may for her children. They, if they have any grit in them, will stand by her and help her, and it is not obvious to the world where the shoe pinches. (Courage is a great quality and it reigns in such small beings! such apparently gentle women's souls!) And if her children don't rise up and call her blessed, then indeed her lot is hard, and she can only think of and feel that satisfaction that

knows of "the consciousness of duty well done" which "makes music at midnight."

We cannot well separate the man's work and the woman's work, and the great beauty of it all lies in the idea that they rise or fall together Godlike, bond or free. Here the Motherhood of the unwedded woman comes in. She has the leisure to work for and to love and cherish the homeless and the wandering, and to her is not infrequently given the joy and satisfaction of dealing with these creatures successfully, whom their own kith and kin have failed to understand.

In the mother's work as the housekeeper there is a grave responsibility, for is not she thus the health-giver or preserver, the preventive of so much ill? As her household grows older and goes out to work, she really becomes the physician and healer of the heavy demands that strenuous, continuous work makes upon the physical and nervous system. Each individual's health and taste has to be considered in her housekeeping energies; and her temper and peacefulness, her order and method, have generally to do with that feeling of rest that brings the men folk back to the nest at eventide to gain repose and encouragement for the next day's struggle. No doubt two play at every game, and if the men are a bit tiresome it is the privilege of Motherhood to soothe the atmosphere, to amuse the weary one, and to let the man feel that home means love and peace.

It is not merely in home-life and its trivial round and common task that furnishes a scope for ideal Motherhood. Women who move in society have a great opportunity of exercising its beneficent charms. All over the world the worker, man, is tired with his day's contest, be it in commerce, in literature, in science, in art, in politics, in philanthropy. In whatever walk he may have been serving the state during the day, in the evening he is ready for some form of relaxation. Does he ever find it more pleasing than when it comes from the intercourse with a charming woman? And what is a charming woman, but one who unselfishly gives all her Motherhood's best instincts to please her neighbours at dinner, or into whatever form of amusement society has elected to call her for the moment? The attitude of Motherhood in society is one of frankness, of sympathy, of unselfish interest in others. And the whole world is ever glad to get hold of

the woman who understands the art of pleasing and being pleased, in fact she who grasps the essence of Motherhood is oil to all social machinery.

And now, having burdened you in fact, I feel I've nearly smothered you in "oughts" and advice and your responsibilities, I hope you will forgive me if I have taken nearly all your breath away. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," and we must, by the light of hope, set forth to achieve the best we can. For our Motherhood and its cares we need some change and some holiday; we want to be kept young and we want to be kept fresh in spite of our ardent desire to do our duty by what I have heard called "dusthole interests." It is well to encourage a hobby; shall we say some taste should be cultivated that absorbs the mind for an hour or two each day outside the actual home work? A garden is a great comfort, or even a window garden will suffice to freshen the interests and give a feeling of recreation. A special line of reading or study may serve. Lectures, visiting a hospital, reading to someone who is ailing, making a collection of anything you fancy, sewing for some charity. It does not much matter for what, as long as it recuperates you to daily energy and daily zeal for all the toils and cares and responsibilities of Motherhood. Life is difficult enough, God knows, to the greater part of the world, and Motherhood and all it suggests should bring out in us all that care for others and that sympathy for others which will lead us to "lend a hand" in all the difficulties that crop up around us.

No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. We *are* our brothers' keepers, and the sense of Motherhood will cause us to give ourselves to all good works, and to spend and be spent for others.

The nobility of actual, real Motherhood seems to lie in her sense of service, and her duties are clearly pronounced and weighty, and cannot be shunted by any right-minded woman. The possibilities of Motherhood are in every woman, but here there is no hard and fast ruling, it must with her be optional. She is free to make her choice, and she seems less responsible to the onlooker, having no recognised tie, but to the individual woman herself there is a hand that beckons to her to bestow her gifts of Motherhood graciously in order that she, too, may know what it is to have lived and loved.