

Children's Companionship.

"Speaking of going to the country with the children," said Mrs. MacArthur, "I have a reason for wanting to take mine out of town quite unconnected with their health. Indeed, I often find myself wishing that I could live in some remote wilderness until my little folks are grown up. I dread the contact for them of other children less carefully trained, and though some of my friends think me over anxious, I see very plainly that Ella and Robbie are learning things at school and in the street which are really dreadful."

"As for instance?" observed Aunt Sophia.

"O, I can't begin to tell you all about it right here in the sitting-room, but in a general way I may say that they see and hear much which is coarse, vulgar, and even depraved, in their intercourse with their little companions. They are very open and confidential with me, and I generally hear the whole story of the day at bedtime; but I am much less annoyed at what they tell me than at the unconscious revelations which they make. Robbie, who has been always a very gentle boy, got angry with Renwick the other evening, and, to my horror, lisped out a frightful word—not profane, exactly, but very near it—and I hear some new slang expression from him every week. In fact, I am making up a private *index expurgatorius*, and it is astonishing what an education I am receiving in objectionable phrases. My trouble with Ella is different. She has been so sweet and unconscious of herself, so perfectly free from childish vanity, and neither her father nor I have ever allowed any one at home to talk to her about beaux, or any of the nonsense some little girls hear so early. But lo and behold! I find my daughter at ten wanting to wear her best hat to the picnic because Willie Remsen will be there; and I see her putting on airs when little Jimmie Feverfew comes over to borrow a polonaise pattern for his mother. You laugh, Aunt Sophia, but I assure you I am in earnest. I fear my darlings will be ruined. I wish I could seclude them somewhere till Ella is twenty, and Rob has whiskers. And then there's baby Renwick growing bigger and more like a boy every day of his life!"

"Now, Mrs. MacArthur," said the minister, "you must listen to a bit of wisdom. I have fancied that something was bothering you all this evening, and I'm glad you've told it out. It is very natural for a fond mother to be solicitous for her children's best good, and a Christian mother would be much to blame if she were careless concerning their moral training; still, you forget what a power there is in the constant influence of pure examples at home. You do not sufficiently consider the immense force there is in a Christian atmosphere. Look about you over the families of our acquaintance. Whatever has been the central thought—the main purpose, so to speak, of any household—the children have grown up and been shaped by that. In some houses music has been the thing most highly prized, and they have turned out fine performers, sweet singers and elegant critics. In others, social distinctions are most cared for, or fashion, or fine furniture, or nice house-keeping. Strike the keynote and you find the whole choir in accord. From feathers and flowers to foreign missions is a wide range, but in my own church I can show examples of devotion to each of them, and to all sorts of shades and grades between. Trust in God, teach your girls and boys to be obedient and truthful, and you need fear no evil."

"It is a great thing," said little Mrs. Moody, "to have the confidence of one's children as Mrs. MacArthur has. A mother need not tremble if

she knows all that is going on."

This was spoken sadly, and with a half sighing intonation, and we all felt sorry; for who did not know that the Moodys were distressed over their son, lately a promising youth, who had somehow gone wrong and fallen into evil ways.

Aunt Sophia was waiting her turn. Whatever the topic, this good woman has an opinion ready.

"I think it would be the greatest pity for Ella and Robbie to be brought up in the woods, and so, in her heart, does their mother think, too—not but that a spell in the woods would be splendid fun for them this summer. I hope they'll be allowed to run to their utmost tether, and be as wild as hawks when once they get to the mountains. But there is a strength which comes from mingling with others; a polish and an ease of manner which cannot be acquired by those who have never any society. Intelligent boys and girls who are well taught at home learn to discriminate between the good and the bad at an early age. As for Ella's notice of the little boys, I would not appear to observe it if I were her mother. Give her plenty to do. Let her learn how to make cakes and pies, and have the other girls in to help; or get up a little sewing circle for them, with some object in view. It is because the children of these days have so few old-fashioned occupations that they grow so giddy. I myself had a dear little lover when I was only eight; but I could not think about him much, for I had old Peter Parley to study, my sampler to stitch and the dishes to wash, and my hands were full."

"Boys," remarked Uncle John, "are sometimes unfairly judged by women, who want to see them keeping up little girl-ways long after they are out of the nursery. You will sometimes meet a lad of seven with golden curls down on his shoulders, and delicate frills and ruffles setting off his pretty face, and, if you watch, you will discover that he envies the ragged urchins who paddle in the gutter, and play hide-and-seek with the policemen. It don't do to coddle a boy too much. He must learn to rough it a little. He must be pardoned if he sometimes gets hold of a little slang. Give him a good foundation of principle, and after awhile he'll shed the first skin of rudeness and emerge a gentleman."

"There I don't agree with you," quickly replied the minister. "A gentle man is the product of a gentle boy. These ladies are in the right in their ideas. You cannot be too careful about beginnings."

"If men—fathers, brothers, employers and teachers—would look out for their own department, there would be less to complain of in boys. A boy usually models himself after his father or his big brother," said Aunt Sophia.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners." This was from the gentle mother. "I would advise Mrs. MacArthur, and others who have their children around them, to keep them as much as possible under their own eyes. Let the boys have a tool-shop in the house, and the girls a play-room. Give them gardens of their own. Let them have domestic pets—birds, dogs, cats, rabbits—whatever they fancy. Even if you don't love dumb animals, cultivate a love for them in your children. It makes them gentle and tender to have something dependent on them for its care and happiness. Some ladies are so afraid of a little dirt in the hall, a spot or two on the paint, or a little noise, that they make their children exiles from home much of the time. Companionship under the home roof—with mother not staying close by like a spy, but hovering near, like a guardian angel—will be beneficial to most children. I do not approve of the city street as a play-ground; but

boys must have some room for their pleasures, and there is no place like home.—*Christian at Work.*

Eternal Dish-Washing.

BY REV. T. E. BECKER.

The quiet fidelity with which she will dish-wash her life away for "him," is a marvel of endurance and grace. Just here is the servitude of woman heaviest; no sooner is her work done, than it requires to be done again. Man works up jobs, ends them, and takes his pay. This pay can be translated into something else desirable. A man works all day, and draws pay for his day's work. This pay allures him, as oats a horse homeward bound. Thus men work by terms and jobs; and although work is endless as to quantity, yet when cut up into terms and jobs, we men go heartily on our journey and count our milestones.

Not so with our mates. "She" mends our socks, and we put our irrepressible toe upon the darned spot, and she darns it again. "She" washes for the family, and the family makes haste to send back the same garments to be washed again. "She" puts the room in order, and we get it ready to be "rid, up" again. The same socks, the same washing, the same room every time. She has no successive jobs, no terms, no pay-day, no tally-stick of life. She washes the same dish three hundred and sixty-five—yes, three times three hundred and sixty-five times every year. No wonder she breaks it and is glad of it! What a relief to say, "I've done with that dish!"

Not only have we washed dishes, but also we cooked and served and helped eat a meal (with bated appetite because of cooking), and now we are astounded at the number of thoughts, and steps, and acts, and processes involved in a very plain supper. Only two of us, jolly cronies, caring nothing for style, and needing only a very plain supper. And we had it, and with it came wisdom.

Gentlemen, all! We go into a room and see a table ready set. It seems to us one thing—it is, in fact, from fifty to two hundred separate things, taken down one by one for us to use, and for "her" to wash and put back whence they came. There is a plate of biscuit. To that plate of simplicity we with our own hands and feet brought together a new quick fire for baking, viz.: kindling wood, raking out stove, and hod of coal; flour from the bin, shortening from the gravy drip down collar, salt from one box, sugar from another, soda from the jar, acid (muriatic) from a bottle, a spoon, a pitcher of water, a dripping pan, and a tin pan for mixing up these ingredients; and after all, happening to forget the things for ten minutes, we burned the biscuits half through, in a way which we men reckon quite unpardonable in a cook. Meanwhile, that one plate of biscuit added to the eternal dish-wash two spoons, two pans, one plate, and a little cup. Just a little piece of steak contributed eight pieces to the dish-wash. A few strawberries sent in six pieces to be got ready to soil again. Four eggs impressed themselves on six separate articles.

Gentlemen, we began at ten minutes of six, and a quarter to eight we found ourselves triumphant—everything cleared away except the dish-cloth. You see we washed up the bread-pan, dish-pan and the sink, scalding them all (and our fingers too), and dried them off with the dishcloth. Now, where on earth can we go to wash out that dishrag? Not in the clean pan! Not over the clean, dry sink! We stood aghast for five minutes, and then wadded up the rag, round like a ball, and tucked it into the far corner of the sink, and shut down the cover—our sink has a cover. But that rag, though hidden, was heavy on our conscience. "She"

never would have done so. We have seen clean dishcloths, but how they washed them passes our skill.

And so, as we said, "she" is away leaving us to thought and good resolutions. We shall be a wiser and a better man for at least two days after her return. And whenever we stop to think, shall rank a successful house-keeper and home-maker, as a worker second to none on a scale of achievement and deserving. Her services are like the air, the rain and the sunshine, indispensable, yet too often enjoyed without thanksgiving.

Climate of Prince Edward Island.

In winter, which begins with November and lasts until May sometimes, Prince Edward offers special inducements to those who enjoy six months of snow, and unlimited opportunities for sitting by the fireside on stormy nights and listening to the furious din of sleet and hail beating against the ringing panes. Northumberland Strait, which separates the island from the main-land, is frozen over from December to April, or rather it is filled with floating ice, which sometimes freezes together in a compact mass. Where the strait is but nine miles wide, the mail is carried across every day on the ice, sometimes at great hazard. A boat on runners is used to carry the bags, serving, as the case may require, either as boat or sledge. The labor of going over the ice hummocks is often excessively laborious. Travel is, of course, almost entirely stopped for the season. I heard of one lady who went across on the ice to attend by the bed of her dying son. But in summer the weather is moderate and equable—more equable than is found on the adjacent continent. The mean temperature for August, 1875, was 67.01°; the mean temperature for the same month for the previous eight years was 64.28°. The highest temperature was 83.50°; the lowest was 51°, in the same month. The prevalent wind was south; the amount of the rainfall was 5,651 inches. Vegetation springs forward rapidly after the winter has fairly passed away; and the verdure on the fields, including wild flowers, continues later than in the New England States. Fogs, which are common in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and on the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia, are very rare on and around Prince Edward Island; and hay fever, that distressing complaint, avoidable only by change of locality, is unknown on that lovely isle.

Steamers ply up the East and West rivers, and an afternoon spent on each of these, takes one through beautiful scenery, and gives a fair idea of the characteristic beauty of the island. Never over five hundred feet high, the landscape is rarely monotonous, for in the interior it is much broken and undulating, while it falls away toward the sea and the bays into gentle slopes which terminate in abrupt red cliffs fifty to a hundred feet high. The brilliant tints, vivid orange and Indian red, of the new red sandstone, still in a formative state, harmonize admirably with the rich ultramarine of the water and the white trunks of the birch woods, or the emerald of the natural lawns which gradually slope to the water in front of neat, cozy farm-houses, kept in good condition, and sheltered from the winter gales by clumps of the primeval fir, pine, and spruce. Nowhere very striking, the scenery of these rivers is charmingly rural and picturesque, every where pleasing, and offering quiet little bits that the artistic eye might transfer effectively to canvas.—S. G. W. BENJAMIN, in *Harper's Magazine for September*.

Bakers "Syria and Egypt under the last Five Sultans" says:—"A schoolmaster's testimony is not valid in a Mohammedan court of law, because it is believed that he must have been mad before he undertook to teach children; or the children must have driven him crazy by the noise they made repeating their lessons aloud all at the same time."

High Etiquette.

If fine manners are naturally associated with rank, the supposition would be that the higher the rank, the finer the manners. It would then follow that the guest of honor, who was also the stranger, would take precedence of all others. It is therefore bewildering to learn that when the Prince of Wales recently gave a dinner to General Grant, the distinguished guest brought up the rear of the procession to the dining-room. We are but bores in etiquette; yet if the Prince of Wales had been the guest of honor of the President of the United States, he would not have been permitted to close the march to dinner; and he would have preceded not as prince, but as guest; for it would be equally true of untitled Mr. Bright or Mr. Gladstone as of a prince. Courtesy is a poor thing if it can not dispense, upon due occasion, with the rigidity of ceremonial forms. It is rumored that the American minister in England was long absorbed in the task of arranging General Grant's invitations, so that he should not be apparently insulted by being treated at entertainments given in his honor with less consideration than any other guest. This is hardly credible to an unsophisticated American, because he can not comprehend either that an English gentleman should offer or an American gentleman accept such a situation. The rules of really good society, whether titled or untitled, are everywhere the same in regard to certain essential points, and it is a pity if they are violated in the house of a prince. To invite an untitled man into a titled company, upon an occasion of pure ceremony where titles determine precedence, is to invite him to go behind. If a prince gives a dinner in honor of an untitled guest, he is bound to honor him chiefly, and he invites the company merely to help him render the honor. If, therefore, it be true that the Prince of Wales gave a dinner especially to General Grant, and permitted the greater part of the company to precede him to the table, General Grant should quietly have left the house, and all the more if, as is constantly said, etiquette and forms are real things to European society. For if that be so, the significance of the situation was that an American without a title, however illustrious, however honored at home, and the especial guest of the occasion is not to be recognized as the equal of titled people. Probably, if the story be true, General Grant was not troubled; but if English gentlemen are required by etiquette to acquiesce in so flagrant a discourtesy, they are greatly to be pitied.—EDITOR'S EASY CHAIR, in *Harper's Magazine for September*.

Happiness.

No man can judge of the happiness of another. As the moon plays upon the waves, and seems to our eyes to favor with a peculiar beam one long track amidst the waters, leaving the rest in comparative obscurity; yet all the while she is no niggard in her lustre—for the rays that meet not our eyes seem to us as though they were not, yet she, with an equal and unfavorable loveliness, mirrors herself on every wave; even so, perhaps, happiness falls with the same brightness and power over the whole expanse of life, though to our limited eyes she seems only to rest on the billows from which the ray is reflected back upon our sight.

The most important advantages we enjoy, and the greatest discoveries that science can boast, have proceeded from men who have either seen little of the world, or have secluded themselves entirely for the purposes of study. Not only those arts which are exclusively the result of calculation, such as navigation, mechanism, and others, but even agriculture, may be said to derive its improvements, if not its origin, from the same source.