

Family Circle.

EDUCATION OF MOTHERS FOR THEIR DUTIES.

From *Child's Management of Infancy*.

In no point of view is it possible to defend the prevailing error of leaving out what ought to constitute an essential part of female domestic education. Till that defect be remedied, thousands of young beings who might have been preserved, will continue to be cut off at the very outset of existence, to the lasting grief of those who would have been delighted to guard them against every danger, had they only known how to set about it. Even in the best regulated families, it is rare to meet with a mother, who, before becoming such, has devoted the least attention to the study of the infant constitution, to the principles on which it ought to be treated, or to the laws by which its principal functions are regulated. The parent, in fact, enters upon the important charge entrusted to her care with less previous preparation for its proper fulfilment, than if it were a plant or flower which God had committed to her management, instead of a living being in whose existence and happiness her whole soul is centered. If a rare or curious flower is presented to her, she will inquire minutely about its natural habits, the time and manner of watering it, the best exposure in which to place it, and the admission or exclusion of the external air; and she will act upon the information. But when a human being is confided to her, the same person will often unhesitatingly accept of the trust, without asking a single question about the necessary treatment, and will rely implicitly on the misty experience of an uninformed nurse, for guidance in her most difficult and deeply interesting duty. It is true, that there are some nurses well qualified by strong natural sense and much experience to direct the mother in her arduous undertaking; but these, are, unhappily, the rare exceptions to a very general rule, and can never justify the parent for neglect of duty imposed upon her, not less by her own maternal feelings, than by the laws of the Divine Creator.

In making these remarks, my wish is not to throw unmerited blame upon mothers, who suffer merely from the defects of their own education, and cannot help themselves. My only object is, to draw attention to the fact, that such defects not only exist, but exert a most injurious influence on happiness, and that they may be easily and effectually remedied. All that is required is, first, to ascertain what are the social duties which belong peculiarly to woman, and then, to give her when young that kind of education which, besides elevating and enlightening her general character, shall best qualify her for their ready fulfilment.

On examining the social position of woman with this view, we cannot fail to perceive that the domestic circle is her peculiar province. While the husband and father is toiling abroad for the means of comfortable subsistence, on her devolve, in an especial manner, the duties connected with the family at home. To her exclusively the infant looks for that cherishing and affectionate care which its tender and delicate frame requires; and to her the child directs every appeal, whether of kindness or suffering, in the full confidence that she will be ever watchful for its happiness and relief, and that from her a look or a cry will procure the requisite sympathy or aid. She alone it is who provides its nourishment, regulates its exercise, and watches over its slumbers. But when we inquire to what extent her previous education has fitted her for the intelligent discharge of the duties which thus constitute the chief objects of her social existence, we find that, perhaps in the majority of instances, on no one point relating to them has she received even a tittle of instruction; and that she enters upon the married state, and becomes a mother, without a suspicion of her deficiency in even the most ordinary information concerning the nature and functions of the infant being whom she is suddenly called upon to cherish and bring up. When her heart is wrung by witnessing its sufferings, and she knows not what hand to turn to save it from impending danger, she bitterly laments her own helplessness, and earnestly wishes she knew how to afford it succor. But not being aware that much of the difficulty and danger proceeds from defective education in herself, and an ignorance of her peculiar duties, which would be culpable if it were voluntary, she grieves over her present affliction without its once occurring to her that those who come after must, in their turn, go through the same painful and profitless experience with their children; unless, by a rational exercise of foresight, they be previously prepared, by the acquisition of the requisite knowledge and training, for that sphere in which they are afterwards to move.

It is true, that all women are not destined, in the course of nature, to become mothers, but how very small is the number of those who are unconnected by family ties, friendship, or sympathy, with the children of others! how very few are there who, at some time or other of their lives, would not find their usefulness and happiness increased by the possession of a kind of knowledge so intimately allied to their best feelings and affections! and how important is it to the mother herself, that her efforts should be seconded by intelligent instead of ignorant assistants! Sickness or other duties may withdraw her from her sphere for a time, and if she

leaves no one behind in whose judgment, knowledge, and watchfulness, she can confide, how miserable for both he self and her offspring? In all points of view, every right-minded woman has an interest in the present inquiry, and in removing the ignorance in which the subject has been involved.

It may, indeed, be alleged, that mothers require no knowledge of the laws of the infant constitution, or of the principles of infant management, because *instinct* is always at hand to correct their errors. As society is at present constituted, however, professional men are rarely consulted till the evil is done, and health is broken, and even if they were, it requires intelligence and information in the mother to fulfil their instructions in a rational and beneficial spirit. Circumstances are continually changing, and were the orders given to-day to be acted upon to the letter a month hence, without regard to what had happened in the interval, it is just as likely that harm would be done as that benefit would result. On the mother, therefore, aided, at most, by the nurse, devolves in reality the chief responsibility. She alone is always on the spot, and can act and direct with the certainty of being obeyed. If she be thoroughly acquainted with her duties, her spirit will pervade every movement even when she is necessarily absent, whereas, if she be ignorant or contradictory in her notions, the more constant and watchful her superintendence, the more mischief will be done, and the more open will she be to the influence of prejudice and quackery.

HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES.

Assist your wives in making home happy; preserve the hearts you have won. When you return from your daily avocations, do you find your habitation alluring? Do not sit down in a corner, silent and sullen, with clouded brow and visage repulsive! Meet your beloved with a smile of joy and satisfaction, take her by the hand. Never indulge in harsh, coarse, or profane words. These, to a woman of refinement, of delicate and tender sensibility, are exceedingly disgusting, and tend to grieve her spirits. Let the law of kindness dwell upon your lips, write it upon the table of your heart. Modesty and delicacy are gems of priceless value; keep them polished like burnished gold. Husbands, be exceedingly cautious never to say or do anything that will tend to mortify the feelings of your wives in company. Here, if possible, show them more marked respect than when alone. Give your wives to understand that you esteem them above all others; make them your confidants: confide in them, and they will confide in you; confidence begets confidence, love begets love, and sweetness begets sweetness. Above all, sympathize with the wives of your bosoms in the hour of affliction. Rejoice with them when they rejoice, and weep with them when they weep. Who, if not a bosom companion, will wipe from the cheek the falling tear of sorrow? Finally, husbands, remember that death will soon sever the connubial cord? When you behold her, with whom you have lived and toiled, and wept and rejoiced, cold and lifeless, laid in the coffin—

Think of happiness so deep and tender
That filled thy heart when wandering by her side,
Think how her faintest smile has power to render
The darkest moment one of love and pride.

And now that this frail form in death grows colder,
A sweet, calm rapture fills the parting hour,
That thou art with her, though a sad beholder,
A witness of the dear Redeemer's power.

Will you then regret that you studied always to promote her happiness? that the law of kindness and love dwelt on your lips evermore? Oh, think, and be now her ministering angel!

INDUSTRY IN FEMALES.

Industry in a female is always an important trait. There is, indeed, so much uncertainty in the voyage of life that no young man can be deemed otherwise than very imprudent, who joins his fate to that of a person whose domestic education and habits of life have been adverse to the practice of this essential virtue. In a career where the utmost prudence is often incompetent to secure success, and where, in nine cases out of ten, the fairest prospects are permanently blighted, and the brightest expectations nipped in their freshest bloom, to enter the domestic relation, and to assume the several responsibilities of husband, father, citizen, with one who is wholly inadequate to sustain shocks of adversity, or to alleviate the burden of misfortune by mutual assistance and support, is not only an evil, but a crime! And yet there are thousands who do so—thousands who annually lead to the altar beings with minds as vacant, and hands unaccustomed to employment, as though they had existed from childhood in a mental and moral vacuum—wholly ignorant of ordinary wants, and of the means by which they are hourly supplied.

THE GREATEST MAN.—The greatest man is he who chooses the right with invincible resolution; who resists the sorest temptations from within and without; who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully; who is the calmest in storms and whose reliance on truth, on virtue, on God, is the most unflinching.—*Dr. Channing.*

Geographic and Historic.

LOCALITIES OF GOSPEL HISTORY.

We enter here upon a more detailed description of the Holy City, and its remains of antiquity. In doing this, I must request the reader to bear in mind, that for the lapse of more than fifteen centuries, Jerusalem has been the abode not only of mistaken piety, but also of credulous superstition, not unmingled with pious fraud. During the second and third centuries after the Christian era, the city remained under heathen sway; and the Christian Church existed there, if at all, only by sufferance. But when, in the beginning of the fourth century, Christianity became triumphant in the person of Constantine; and at his instigation, aided by the presence and zeal of his mother Helena, the first great attempt was made in A. D. 326, to fix and beautify the places connected with the crucifixion and resurrection of the Saviour; it then, almost as a matter of course, became a passion among the multitudes of priests and monks, who afterwards resorted to the Holy City, to trace out and assign the site of every event, however trivial or legendary, which could be brought into connection with the Scriptures or with pious tradition. The fourth century appears to have been particularly fruitful in the fixing of these localities, and in the dressing out of the traditions or rather legends, which were attached to them. But the invention of succeeding ages continued to build upon these foundations; until in the seventh century, the Mahammedan conquest and subsequent oppressions confined the attention of the Church more exclusively to the circumstances of her present distress; and drew off in part the minds of the clergy and monks from the contemplation and embellishment of Scriptural history. Thus the fabric of tradition was left to become fixed and stationary as to its main points; in much the same condition, indeed, in which it has come down to our day. The more fervid zeal of the ages of the crusades, only filled out and completed the fabric in minor particulars.

It must be further borne in mind, that as these localities were assigned, and the traditions respecting them for the most part brought forward, by a credulous and unenlightened zeal, well meant, indeed, but not uninterested; so all the reports and accounts we have of the Holy city and its sacred places, have come to us from the same impure source. The fathers of the Church in Palestine, and their imitators the monks, were themselves for the most part not natives of the country. They knew in general little of its topography; and were unacquainted with the Aramaean, the vernacular language of the common people. They have related only what was transmitted to them by their predecessors, also foreigners; or have given opinions of their own, adopted without critical inquiry and usually without much knowledge. The visitors of the Holy Land in the earlier centuries, as well as the crusaders, all went thither in the character of pilgrims; and looking upon Jerusalem and its environs and upon the land, only through the medium of the traditions of the Church. And since the time of the crusades, from the fourteenth century onwards to the present day, all travellers, whether pilgrims or visitors, have usually taken up their abode in Jerusalem in the convents; and have beheld the city only through the eyes of their monastic entertainers. European visitors, in particular, have ever lodged, and still lodge, almost exclusively, in the Latin convent; and the Latin monks have in general been their sole guides.

In this way and from these causes, there has been grafted upon Jerusalem and the Holy Land a vast mass of tradition, foreign in its source and doubtful in its character; which has flourished luxuriantly and spread itself out widely over the western world. Palestine the Holy City, and its sacred places, have been again and again portrayed according to the topography of the monks; and according to them alone. Whether travellers were Catholics or Protestants, has made little difference. All have drawn their information from the great storehouse of the convents; and, with few exceptions, all reported apparently with like faith, though with various fidelity. In looking through the long series of descriptions, which have been given of Jerusalem by the many travellers since the fourteenth century, it is curious to observe, how very slightly the accounts differ in their topographical and traditional details. There are indeed occasional discrepancies in minor points; though very few of the travellers have ventured to depart from the general authority of their monastic guides. Or even if they sometimes venture to call in question the value of this whole mass of tradition; yet they nevertheless repeat in like manner the stories of the convents; or at least give nothing better in their place.

Whoever has had occasion to look into these matters for himself, will not be slow to admit that the views here expressed are in no degree overcharged. It follows from them,—and this is the point to which I would particularly direct the reader's attention,—that all ecclesiastical tradition respecting the ancient places in and around Jerusalem and throughout Palestine, is of no value, except so far as it is supported by circumstances known to us from the Scriptures or from other cotemporary testimony.—*Robinson's Researches in Palestine.*

A CARAVAN IN THE DESERT.

The hot sun, like the bow of a kila, now trembles over the glistening sands, and plays the most fantastic tricks with the suffering traveller, cheating his vision with an illusory supply of what his senses madly crave. Half-dozing, half-dreaming, as I advanced, lulled into vague reverie, the startling mirage shifting with magic play, expands in gleaming blue lakes, whose cool borders are adorned with waving groves, and on whose shining banks the mimic waves, with wonderful illusion, break in long glittering lines of transparent water—bright, fresh water, so different from the leathery decoction of the zomzemina. On our approach the vision recedes, dissolves, combines again into new forms, all fancifully beautiful: then slowly fades and leaves but the burning horizon, upon which at wide intervals is seen, perhaps, a dim black speck, appearing over the rolling sandy swell like a ship far out at sea; the film of the Desert gives it gigantic dimensions as it approaches: it proves as it nears us to be a caravan of camels from Suez, coming along with noiseless tread,—a few laconic words are exchanged between the Arabs without stopping; in another hour it is left far behind, until again it disappears from vision. Thus pass the sultry and silent hours of noon. There is a terrible and triumphant power of the sun upon this wide region of sterility and death, like that of a despot over a realm blighted by his destructive sway; no trace of verdure is there but the stunted shrub, which struggles at wide intervals about the sandy bed of some dried watercourse; no sign of living thing but the burrow of the rat, the slimy trail of the serpent, or the carcass of the camel, who makes his grave as well as his home in the wilderness, met with in every stage of decay, from the moment when the vultures have just fleshed their beaks in his fallen corpse, till, stripped of every integument, the wind whistles through the ghastly framework of his naked ribs, and his bones, falling assunder and bleached by heat and wind, serve to mark the appointed track upon which his strength was spent.—*From a Journey to Mecca.*

A SOUTH AFRICAN BUSH AND ITS INHABITANTS.

I never saw in any other part of the world, anything resembling the Fish River Bush, nor, I should think, does there exist a tract so difficult to penetrate or to clear. The vegetation is so succulent, that fire has no effect on it, even in the driest weather, and at the same time so strong and rigid, and so excessively dense, that there is no getting through it without cutting your way at every step, unless in the paths made by wild beasts. Yet the Caffres make their way through with wonderful skill and activity, creeping like snakes among the thickets, where no white man can follow them; and this covert, extending so far along the frontier, is of great advantage to them, both in their predatory and hostile incursions, as they can muster in force, and even approach to within a few miles of Graham's Town, without being observed. Not more than twenty years ago, I have been told, the Fish River Bush swarmed with elephants and other wild beasts. Mr. Clarke once saw fifty elephants together near Trompeter's Drift, about 30 miles from Graham's Town; but the active war waged against them for the sake of their ivory, by the Albany settlers, the more frequent passage of men and cattle through these wild tracks, the patrolling and fighting in the Bush during the late Caffre war, have put these aboriginal inhabitants to the rout. At the present day, it is said, not an elephant is to be found in any part of the Fish River Bush. The rhinoceros and buffalo still exist there; but the former, the most dangerous of all the wild beasts of this country, is become extremely rare.

The hippopotamus, or sea-cow, as the Dutch call it, though much reduced in numbers, is still to be found near the mouth of the river. All the large kinds of antelope have become far scarcer than they were formerly within the bounds of the colony, and some are quite extinct. The high, open table plains, called the Bontebok Flats, lying to the north-east of the Winterberg, are still famous for the abundance of large game. Many officers who had visited them for the sake of hunting, assured me that the immense multitudes of wild quadrupeds, especially of the quagga, the gnou or wildebeest, the blesbok, and the springbok, which were there to be seen, were really astonishing. Lions are frequently to be met with on these flats, though much reduced in number by the exertions of the sportsmen. It is said that a lion will seldom attack a man, at least a white man, unless provoked; when roused, he generally walks away at a slow pace, with an air of great deliberation and tranquillity, seeming to say, "I will let you alone, if you let me alone;" but if pursued or fired at, he attacks in his turn with great fury. I had always supposed that he was an animal of solitary habits, but the officers who had hunted on the Bontebok Flats, all concurred in asserting that it was usual to meet with several lions together, sometimes as many as seven or eight.

DISCRETION.—Discretion is the sure sign of that presence of mind without which valor strikes untimely and impotently.